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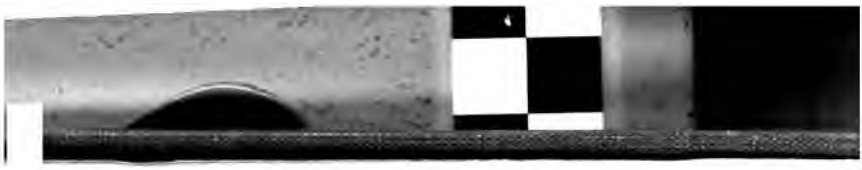


Ethical Democracy

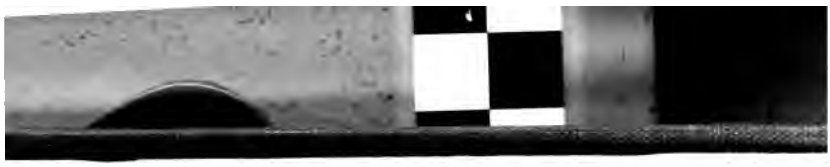


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Ethical Democracy



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Ethical Democracy:

Essays in Social Dynamics

BY

Professor D. G. Ritchie, G. H. Perris, J. R. MacDonald
J. A. Hobson, M.A., Professor J. H. Muirhead
Zona Vallance, F. J. Gould, Margaret
McMillan, Professor Adamson
Christian Collin, M.A., and
Dr Stanton Coit

EDITED FOR THE SOCIETY OF
ETHICAL PROPAGANDISTS
BY STANTON COIT

London
Grant Richards
9 Henrietta Street WC
1900



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PREFACE

THE mere politics of popular government is not at present in so great need of the benefits of discussion as is the relation of democracy to the process of evolution in history, to international co-operation, to industry, to the family, to woman as a social factor, to the moral instruction and education of children, to the philosophic habit among the people, to literature and art in general, and to the inner springs of human conduct. Each of these topics forms the subject of a special essay in this volume. Although every essay is independent of the others, they together give a comprehensive view of the whole ground traversed. The writers who were invited to contribute the different essays were those whom the Society of Ethical Propagandists considered best able to treat the subjects thoroughly and sympathetically, from the point of view indicated by the words—*Ethical Democracy*. The literary manner of the chapters naturally changes with the authorship. Also, on special points a divergence of opinion may manifest itself. It should further be remembered that no one essayist is responsible for opinions not expressed by himself. Since the volume was planned and after most of the essays had been written, the question of Imperialism and its relation to Democracy came prominently before the public, and differences of opinion have become apparent. Especially, Professor D. G. Ritchie desires it to be stated that he in no wise shares any anti-Imperialistic sentiments which other essayists may have expressed here or elsewhere, and Professor J. H. Muirhead that he is not in sympathy with the prevailing tone on this question.



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ETHICAL DEMOCRACY

EVOLUTION AND DEMOCRACY

D. G. RITCHIE

"EVOLUTION" is very generally looked upon as the central idea of modern scientific and philosophical thought. "Democracy" is for many the final goal, or at least it is the inevitable path, of our political and social progress. It is reasonable to connect the two terms and to ask ourselves what light can be thrown by biological conceptions upon the theoretical and practical problems of society. But we must guard carefully against the rhetorical and uncritical use of phrases which have a scientific sound, or which have served as the watchwords of eager struggles. Those who believe themselves advanced thinkers are sometimes apt to treat everything that takes place through evolution as if it were identical with progress, and to take it for granted that the democratic movements of our age must, simply because they *are* the movements of our age, be all of them of a progressive kind. More cautious thinking suggests many difficulties; and it is sometimes even argued that biology throws no light whatever upon sociology, theoretical or practical. In the enthusiasm caused by the theories of Mr Herbert Spencer and the discoveries of Darwin it was often too lightly assumed that society could be explained by the direct application of the formulæ which had proved so successful in the biological sphere. "The social organism" seemed to be a key to unlock political and social mysteries. The structure and the functions of society were thought to be fully intelligible only if approached from the biological side. Social evolution has been supposed to need the law of natural

selection and that alone to make its tendencies scientifically interpretable. These exaggerations have naturally provoked reaction: and we now find some thoughtful writers refusing to allow any value whatever to the conception of the "social organism": it is only a metaphor, and a very misleading metaphor. The science of sociology must be kept clear of biological influence.* Now this is an exaggeration on the other side. Human beings, whatever else they may be, are animals, and, as such, are subject to biological laws; and no careful study of social conditions, with a view to their understanding or their amelioration, can afford to neglect the biological facts of heredity and sex and the primitive, but ever present, struggle for food and for the means of rearing offspring. Though the attempts to carry out into detail the image of the social organism have often led to absurdity, and though practical deductions from it of a perfectly contradictory kind can easily be made, the metaphor has at least helped to free discussion of political problems from artificial assumptions, such as those of the social contract theory; and the word "evolution" may at least serve to remind the impatient reformer of institutions that he is dealing with what cannot be suddenly changed, nor in any arbitrary direction. The idea of social evolution goes along with less revolutionary methods than the older doctrines of social contract and natural rights.

In the wide philosophical sense of the term, the conception of evolution does not perhaps give much help towards understanding or forecasting or judging the movements of society, except in so far as it may suggest some general considerations for estimating progress. If evolution be the transition from incoherent homogeneity to definite heterogeneity, this would seem to show that the more highly developed society must be that in which there is at once greater social order and greater diversity in the type of individual development. The formula of evolution does not indeed give us any standard

* I may refer to the writings of M. Tarde and M. Coste, who take very different views of sociology, but are agreed on this matter. Mr R. Mackintosh holds the same view in his book, "From Comte to Benjamin Kidd."



by which we can balance "order" and "liberty," unity and diversity, against one another: and it must be remembered that the process of evolution may include degeneration as well as what we call progress, greater adaptation on the whole being secured by the sacrifice of individual completeness or independence. Still, this general conception of evolution may prevent us from accepting an ideal of society which underestimates the value and the need of cohesion and discipline — an ideal of *laissez faire* such as Mr Herbert Spencer retains from the individualistic Radicalism of his youthful days in spite of all his biological formulæ. On the other hand, the significance of differentiation in development may guard us against the monotonous rigidity of some collectivistic ideals, which provide no sufficient scope for individual initiative and no sufficient security against the crystallisation that means decay and death to societies. From the general formula of evolution—a formula such as most philosophers from the time of the Ionian Greeks downwards might accept—we are at least warned that the only safe movement of social change is one which shall avoid anarchy on the one side and over-regulation on the other. The golden mean is a vague ideal and standard of conduct; and yet it is a more useful principle than many that seem more definite by being more abstract.

When, however, the conception of evolution is applied to politics, people are generally, and rightly, thinking of specially biological conceptions: and of these the most prominent is that of Natural Selection. If progress depends upon a perpetual struggle for existence, there seems indeed a *prima facie* argument for liberty in the negative sense of *laissez faire*; but everything else that may be included in democratic ideals appears to be condemned as hopeless or mischievous in its consequences. Nature produces not equality but inequality; nay, inequality is even requisite for natural selection to work upon. Fraternity, again, seems clearly impossible when ceaseless struggle and ruthless elimination of the unfit are the very means of progress. The argument from biology to politics would appear to support, not democracy, but aristocracy, and to enforce the enduring necessity of war and of unchecked industrial competition. If democracy can be



defended on the basis of scientific thinking about society, it seems to be only in so far as democracy means the opening of careers to those who have the talents for them, and the abolition of institutions and sentiments that hamper the struggle for life and interfere with "that beneficent private war" which leads to the survival of the fittest.

Some such inferences are, indeed, what are commonly drawn by literary opponents of radical and socialistic ideals. The "aristocratic preferences" of nature and the ceaseless competition by which alone fitness for existence is produced and maintained, supply excellent rhetorical common-places, when the advocate of things as they are wishes to confute advanced politicians in the name of advanced science. There is an important element of truth in such arguments; but the practical inferences are very crudely and carelessly drawn from their supposed biological premises. We must seek to realise much more precisely what is the exact meaning of natural selection, and how far, or with what modifications, it can be applied to the interpretation of social evolution. Then only are we entitled to find any guidance in our criticism of political aspirations or in our search for safe methods of reform.

There has recently been a disposition among certain biologists to minimise the significance of Darwin's great discovery of natural selection. It is said, for instance, that natural selection only means elimination of the less fit: it is a merely negative process. The important factor in development would thus seem to be the positive element—whatever that may be—which determines the variations upon which natural selection works. Now, it is perfectly true that the theory of natural selection pre-supposes variations. But the fact of a tendency to variation (in different degrees) in vegetable and animal organisms admits of no doubt. Examine the flowers that spring from the same root, the plants grown from seeds taken from the same seed-vessel, the puppies of the same litter, the children of the same parents,—variation will always be found, sometimes slight, sometimes startling in amount. This indefiniteness or instability of nature is the material for natural selection. How to explain it is certainly a



task for the biologist; but so also is the fact of hereditary likeness. That the offspring resembles the parent on the whole, and that the offspring differs more or less from the parent—these are undoubted facts, and each of them looked at by itself constitutes a difficult problem, when attention is directed to it. Heredity and variation—*i.e.* identity or continuity and diversity or change—are pre-supposed as facts by the theory of natural selection, which is not meant to explain *them* but to account historically for the existence of species—*i.e.* to explain why certain variations become the permanent and inherited characteristics of whole groups of organisms. Those variations which prove advantageous to the organism in its particular environment are selected, because those organisms with unfavourable variations are less successful in finding nourishment and in leaving a numerous or vigorous offspring behind them. In this sense natural selection is certainly a negative process; but to call it "merely negative," as if it were therefore unimportant, is just as if we were to call the work of the sculptor merely negative, because the marble block must be there and he only chips away what he does not want for his purpose. When variations are described as "accidental" or "spontaneous" it must of course be understood that these terms mean only "not as yet fully accounted for." One can indeed understand how variation in the protozoa is caused simply by the action of the environment on the organism. Again, one can easily see how the existence of sex produces variations which do not arise in asexual reproduction: and this explains why the appearance of sex in the world should immensely accelerate the process of evolution by giving natural selection a greater number of variations to work upon. A tendency to vary greatly within certain more or less definite limits is itself an inherited and inheritable tendency: and such a tendency would clearly be advantageous to a species which had to meet diverse or fluctuating conditions, and this tendency to variation might therefore be itself preserved and increased by natural selection. Other explanations of variation may be requisite; but it is certainly no scientific explanation to say that a variation is due to some definite choice or purpose in nature. Such phrases are scientifically on a level with "occult



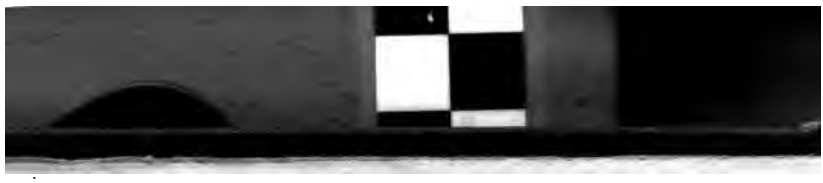
qualities," or "the soporific virtues" of opium. To suppose that a Divine Artificer gives organisms a tendency to vary in certain definite useful directions and then looks on while they fight for survival with one another is an inconsistent mixture of mythology and natural science: it is lame science and it is very unphilosophical theology. The difficulty before us is not merely this and that puzzling knot requiring a *Deus ex machina*. The whole process of things, the existence of nature and man, is a problem for thought, whether man be made straight away from inorganic dust or slowly evolved out of lower animal forms by the working of natural selection. The philosophical problem arises equally out of either belief; but scientifically the two explanations stand on very different levels. The process of natural selection leads to the survival of the fittest; and so, looking back on the whole process, we may say that nature "intends" the fittest. But we must not introduce this intention or purpose here and there to fill up gaps in the chain of material and efficient causes. "Final cause" or purpose may be the only point of view from which we can understand the meaning of the whole; but the episodic introduction of final causes here and there is rightly repudiated by science and by all careful philosophy.

Natural selection, as a theory, has the enormous advantage of being an indisputable fact. Anyone who watches a piece of neglected garden ground, or a collection of fish and other animals in an aquarium, can see the process going on. Those kinds and those individuals alone survive which are best fitted to survive in the particular environment. They are not necessarily the kinds and individuals we like best or wish to keep alive. Those that are less able to obtain the nourishment they need are perpetually eliminated. Natural selection is thus a *vera causa*; it is a fact, not in itself an hypothesis. The question that has to be solved is simply, How far does it serve as a sufficient explanation of the differences between species and of the relative stability of types? Darwin's and Russel Wallace's theory of natural selection has thus an immense logical advantage, as an hypothesis, over the Lamarckian theory of use-inheritance or its modern revivals; because the mere fact of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, however



convenient and plausible as an explanation, is open to doubt, and, on "the principle of parsimony," we should not resort to a doubtful or unknown cause if a known cause is sufficient. The theory of natural selection is, moreover, only the form under which the movement of bodies in the line of least resistance appears in the more complex biological sphere. Why has a stream taken this direction rather than that? It is because in one direction its course is impeded by very hard rock, in another it can work its way through softer materials. The environment "selects" the channel of the stream by hindering it from moving in other ways. If we like, we may call the onward rush of the water under the law of gravitation a positive cause, and the selection due to the environment a merely negative process. But if anyone were asked why the river flowed in a particular direction, and answered, "Because by nature it had a tendency to go in that direction," he would not be thought to throw much light on the problem; whereas he who points out the influence of the environment does give a causal explanation.

At the other end of the scale it seems to me that the process of thought, the process by which the mind, having before it various hypotheses or possibilities, rejects those which it regards as unsuitable and accepts that which presents fewest difficulties and gives most satisfaction—this process of thought is not, in any sincere person, a process of arbitrary choice or deliberate "will to believe" or to disbelieve, but a process of natural selection in the mental sphere. What seems to A certain or probable may seem to B absurd; the theory which best fits in with the existing system of knowledge and belief in one mind may be unfitted to thrive in a different mind, and the orthodoxy of one intellectual environment may be incapable of growth or survival in a different spiritual soil. The process by which we accept and reject opinion is not merely *analogous to* natural selection. It is that same process in a higher sphere, though we may prefer to call it "the dialectic movement of thought" or by some other term which is free from biological associations. The element of consciousness differentiates intellectual selection from biological natural selection, just as life differentiates biological natural selection from what takes place in



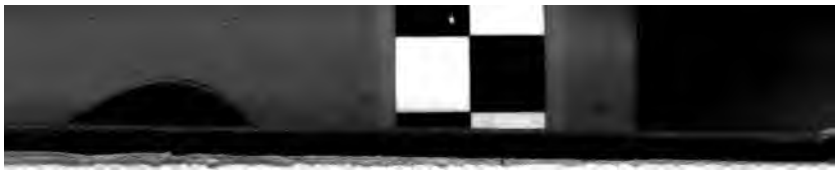
the merely physical realm. But the obvious difference should not blind us to the underlying identity. Nature in the widest sense includes the mind of man as well as his bodily organism; it includes the facts dealt with by psychology as well as those dealt with by physics and biology. And I can see no absolute objection to applying Darwin's term "natural selection," or Mr H. Spencer's term "survival of the fittest," outside the purely biological sphere in order to express this identity of principle. Of course, if by conscious selection be meant the deliberate choice of this idea rather than that, because of some extraneous authority to which the mind submits without real inner conviction, the process is then analogous to artificial selection. If I deliberately keep and sow, year by year, all the seeds of red sweet peas and destroy all the pods of the purple flowers, that is not natural selection; and, similarly, if I deliberately read only one kind of book, and associate only with one type of person, I am artificially shaping the contents of my mind, and consequently determining what I shall have a chance of assimilating and to what I shall refuse the opportunity of finding a place in my thoughts. But the process of mental selection is seldom purely artificial; the greater part of what honest persons call their conscious thinking goes on in them and determines their beliefs often in spite of their personal inclinations. Not "I will to believe," but "*Ich kann nicht anders*" is the utterance of the man who has earnestly grappled with a theoretical or a practical problem. He may or may not be deluded in the eyes of those who consider themselves competent judges, but a mind and character of a certain type and training can only assimilate certain ideas, and must reject all others, *while it remains what it is.** The scholar interpreting an ancient classic, the honest juryman deliberating on his verdict with the evidence before him and his own prejudices unconsciously in the background, or any conscientious person who has to adopt a line of conduct, may often be in great doubt as to what is right, but if he comes to a decided conviction, he does so, not because of an arbitrary resolution adopted before-

* This last clause recognises the psychological facts misinterpreted in the ordinary free-will doctrine. I purposely do not touch on the metaphysical aspects of the problem here.



hand, but because he feels that the truth must be so and not otherwise. His mind can only harbour certain ideas or principles, and must reject what is inconsistent with the system of his knowledge and beliefs as that exists at the time.

If, then, the principle of natural selection applies even in the sphere of intellectual processes, there need be little doubt that it is applicable to the less conscious processes which make up the most of our social life. There may be some inconvenience in extending a biological term to the sociological sphere, but, as already said, it is important to recognise an identity of principle amid different modes of application. There seems a gap between the evolution of animal organisms and the evolution of customs and institutions and all that constitutes the materials of civilisation; but the transition from the one kind of evolution to the other is gradual. The use of tools and the use of vocal language make a vast gap between man and the lower animals: they certainly lead to the gap becoming greater and greater in the later stages, but in their beginnings they are only the extension of what the higher animals below man have already in faint germ. The first brute ancestor of man that used a stone to break a hard nut made it possible for his human descendants to do many things for which their mere bodily frame is unfitted. This was a variation which may have originated by "chance"—*i.e.* without any deliberate adaptation of means to end; but, once there, natural selection could work upon it, and we have the beginning of a new epoch in which changes in the bodily organism might cease, in which the bodily organism might even deteriorate in efficiency, and yet in which social progress could go on with a rapidity impossible in the merely biological stage of natural selection. Even on the Lamarckian theory of use-inheritance there can be only a very slight increase of power to each generation through the transmission of acquired characteristics. Thus the experience acquired by the individual perishes with him, either altogether or almost entirely, unless he is able to store up the results of such experience in a form independent of his own life and even of the life of his descendants.



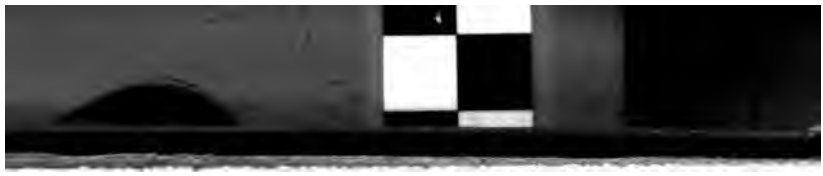
Tools—and from the crudest type of implement the most elaborate kinds of machinery and the most complicated and enduring structures differ only in degree of development—tools and language, when language rises beyond the emotional stage and becomes capable of describing and so of preserving the traditions of past experience, can be handed on not merely to offspring, but to others of different race, if only they have reached a sufficient stage to use such alien inventions. Here at once we have an important difference between biological and social evolution, and yet the principle of natural selection is operating in both of them. Tools, language, institutions, ideas, are varied from time to time by accident, by attempts at imitation which turn out to be inexact copies, by the combination of several different models. Variations which suit this or that set of circumstances are selected and transmitted by social inheritance. Others die out or survive only if harmless or not very hurtful. But this process of selection and transmission can go on to a great extent independently of the survival of races. It is the characteristic advantage, and at the same time the characteristic danger, of all the appliances which make up civilisation that they can be transmitted and inherited independently of biological heredity. A race may be decaying in vigour while nevertheless continuing for a long time to have an advantage in the competition with other races; but, on the other hand, the vigorous, less-civilised race may make an immense step forwards by adopting an equipment which others have perfected and, when the advantage in respect of equipment is nearly equalised, the more physically vigorous may easily overthrow an exhausted, though long-civilised, stock. Civilisation—or, to take a wider term, inheritable equipment (equipment, I mean, in respect of stored-up experience, science, mechanical appliances, institutions, etc.)—produces a relative cessation of natural selection in its biological sense. There is never any cessation of natural selection in that wider sense in which it includes the competition between languages, institutions, customs, and all the other kinds of social equipment. But, though biological natural selection may be relatively and temporarily in abeyance, it is working to some extent all the time. The race



may not be to the swift nor the battle to the strong so far as individuals, so far even as existing social groups, are concerned: the less swift may travel by steam, and the less strong may be armed with machine-guns, may be better disciplined, or more skilfully led. But after several generations the cessation of biological natural selection must tell against the energy and capacity of a people, though they inherit the equipment of more vigorous ancestors. Wherever natural selection is in abeyance there will be racial degeneration, owing to the survival in relatively increasing numbers of the physically less fit, unless the "natural" process of weeding-out can be replaced by judicious artificial selection. This seems to me the briefest statement that can be given of the main problem that confronts all who value harmony, peace, culture, and who dread the cruelty of nature's mode of selection when it takes place among conscious and thinking human beings, whose souls suffer from the struggle that keeps in health and vigour the wild beasts who are not plagued by a reflective conscience or too keen a sense of pity. Wherever there are institutions and traditions, there artificial selection of a kind is going on —*e.g.* if certain customs about marriage have grown up which interfere with the primitive struggle for mates,* or if prudence or ascetic religion lead to the continuance of the species being left mainly to the most reckless. No human race, however rudimentary its language, however rude its institutions, however meagre the range of its ideas, is subject to mere biological natural selection. To get the advantage which natural selection gives to plants and animals in the wild state we should have to cease to be human. Our only resource is, therefore, to make our institutions and ideas as useful and as reasonable as possible in order to prevent the inevitable artificial selection of civilisation being injurious to the race.

While, then, biological natural selection must apply to

* Sexual selection, in Darwin's sense, means a certain interference with strict natural selection, and is an aesthetic luxury in which animals can only indulge where natural selection is not very severe. Thus very gorgeous colouring, like that of the male bird of Paradise, would be a disadvantage and a danger, except in a locality where the birds had not many enemies, till Europeans came to obtain adornments for their own unfeathered females.



human beings as to all other animals, its effects are complicated and in many ways counteracted by the artificial selection which is due to man's external equipment (I borrow this Aristotelian phrase to express the equipment which is not part of his bodily structure). These external equipments are themselves subject to a natural selection, identical in principle with biological natural selection, but producing very different results. Moreover, among human beings we have a very great extension of a type of struggle and selection of which the beginnings are to be found among the gregarious animals. There is a struggle between one social group and another: and this struggle between groups at once mitigates and complicates the struggle between individual and individual within each group. But, whereas an animal who belongs to a social group belongs only to one group (herd, hive, flock, etc.), human beings, as they rise in the scale of civilisation, belong each to a greater variety of social groups. This seems curiously forgotten by many who have made much use of the conception of the social organism. The social organism is often taken as if it could only be identical with the nation. Again, by others it is made to mean human beings as grouped by their economic wants—the political structure being strangely regarded as something extraneous and inorganic. Sometimes the social organism is spoken of as if it included the whole of mankind. Now, one thing that makes a social organism so very different from an animal organism is just this, that every human being, except those belonging to the most primitive types of society, which are nearest to the mere animal herd, belongs to many social organisms. Family, nation, parish, church, profession, trade-union, club, political party, social set—all these are social organisms, more or less definite in structure, more or less centralised; and many of them overlap. A man's kindred may belong to several different nationalities; his religion may make him the member of an international society or may cut him off from the ties of kindred. Each of these social organisms has its own life and is subject to natural selection. Many of them conflict with one another, compete for members, and flourish only by the decay of the others. The individual's



allegiance is often divided, and he has to face painful conflicts of duties because of the non-coincidence of the organisms to which he belongs.

It it thus sufficiently obvious that the interpretation of social phenomena in the light of the theory of natural selection is no easy matter. In fact, it might almost seem as if, whilst natural selection must apply in social evolution, it were impossible for any finite intelligence to say how in any given case it will apply. The light which evolutionary conceptions seemed to promise turns out to be a bewildering series of cross-lights and interlacing shadows. In any case the greatest caution must be exercised, and we must guard against the uncritical use of biological analogies. The phrase "struggle for existence" leads many people to think of war as its typical exemplification in human society. Struggle suggests fighting; and, on that ground, indeed, the Darwinian idea has sometimes been resented as unjust to nature, which, it is urged, is not all "red in tooth and claw," not a mere "squabble around the platter," but contains elements as well of peace and love and mutual help. But, though the phrase "struggle for existence" suggests a battle, the phrase, as used technically by Darwin, is taken by him "in a large and metaphorical sense, including dependence of one being on another, and including (what is more important) not only the life of the individual, but success in leaving progeny."* On the theory of natural selection, the helplessness of infancy is a main factor in producing stable institutions and moral ideas. But war, also, in spite of much prevalent rhetorical metaphor, is something very different from the act of the lion or the vulture seizing its prey. It is something more than the hunting of a pack of wolves; for an army, at least any army that is likely to be formidable or successful against another army, involves not mere instinctive common action of predaceous individuals, but a highly-developed system of conscious co-operation. Thus war comes to be an important factor in the making of nations, in the production of united social organisms, within which the animal struggle for existence is therefore mitigated. If we look among human beings for the

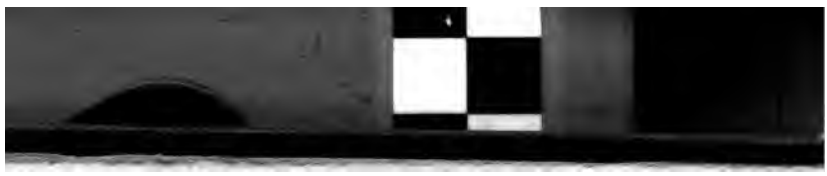
* "Origin of Species," 6th edit. p. 50.

strict continuance of the biological struggle, we find it rather in industrial and commercial competition. Shopkeepers in the same line of business, lawyers, doctors, schoolmasters, clerks, labourers who are "free"—*i.e.* who are neither slaves nor members of trade-unions—are struggling for existence in the Darwinian sense, though the poor-law, "charity," family ties, and the inheritance of property may introduce artificial interference with natural selection. Even between nations the Darwinian struggle is illustrated more completely in the continuous competition for markets, than in an occasional war, which is usually only a symptom of a wider and more persistent rivalry. A war between civilised powers is the primitive form of a lawsuit; it is a lawsuit between parties who do not acknowledge a common sovereign. War between a civilised power and barbarians or savages may be often simply a matter of police: and the conquest of barbarians by a civilised power will result in the cessation of war among the barbarians, the diminution of famines and pestilences, the rapid increase of population, and, consequently, in the long run, the intensification of the "peaceful" animal struggle for existence.

So complicated, then, is the operation of natural selection in human society, so varied and entangled are the organisms affected by it, that we might despair of finding any help from the idea of evolution. The chief lesson would seem to be extreme caution in accepting any biological metaphors or phrases as arguments and a sense of the necessity of going behind the more obvious applications of them. In one respect, however, the conceptions of organism and natural selection are of immense service to our ethical and political thinking. They put the utilitarian theory upon a scientific basis, they free it from the objections which intuitionists could so easily make to it, and they rescue ethics and politics from the arbitrary and subjective standards of intuitionism. I do not think that the theory of natural selection can give a complete explanation of the meaning of right and wrong; it can only attempt to explain the matter or content of our ethical judgments. The ultimate question of the relation of the ideal to the actual, of "ought" to "is," of the sense in which man is more than a mere part of nature—this



ultimate question (whether soluble or not) belongs to the metaphysic of ethics. But for the practical discussion of what is better or worse in social conduct and institutions we gain greatly by having the questions removed from the region of prejudice, superstition, and sentiment. In all democratic communities (unless they are ancient and extremely conservative democracies like some of the small Swiss cantons), rhetoric has an importance which it could not possibly obtain in very oligarchical states. The orators and "sophists" of ancient Athens, the popular leaders and journalists of England, France, and America, help to mould the opinions of to-day and the action of to-morrow; and democracies are therefore peculiarly apt to suffer from unreasoning sentiment and from bad metaphysics. Appeals to traditional prejudice, appeals to the Law of Nature and natural rights, may contain in them much that is noble and inspiring, but they require to be criticised "in a calm hour." And we must find some standard that does not depend entirely on an individual conscience which regards its oracular utterances as infallible. "The Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number" was supposed to be such a standard—scientific because it introduced a quantitative principle, and democratic because it consulted the interests of the majority. The appearance of precision in this standard, however, vanishes after examination. The calculus of pleasures gives rise to endless difficulties when any attempt is made to work it out. How is intensity to be measured against duration? How are one person's pleasures to be compared with another's? How is the inferior or more transitory pleasure of the many to be balanced against the intenser or more lasting pleasures of a few? The real historical significance of the Benthamist formula is to be found, not in its attempt to introduce quantitative precision in a region that does not admit of it — that fatal fascination of misplaced mathematics — but in the democratic appeal to the interests of the majority. Historically and practically the utilitarian principle meant that the good of the whole community was to be the standard by which political institutions were to be judged, and not any merely traditional maxims nor any arbitrary



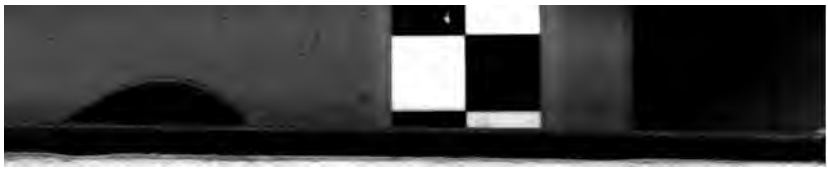
theories of a Law of Nature which everyone might interpret in his own way. The difficulties of the utilitarian theory arise from its individualistic basis, from its assumption that a society is only an aggregate of individuals — a survival from that very doctrine of natural rights which the theory was intended to overthrow. The practical value of the theory remains if we interpret the common good as the well-being of the social organism of which the individual is a member.

The theory of natural selection fits in with utilitarianism as thus modified; for, according to that theory, the customs and ideas of the more successful society must be such as are advantageous to it—*i.e.* such as tend to its stability and endurance. Natural selection makes the fittest society or race survive, but the process is slow and costly in suffering to individuals. If in any case we can forecast what customs and institutions will promote social well-being, we may by adopting them obtain such stability and endurance without the same sacrifice of individual life and happiness. An intelligent and far-sighted utilitarian policy is a system of rational artificial selection. The standard of social well-being is not free from difficulties of its own; but every ethical principle formulated in general terms may give rise to some casuistical problems. How are we to balance the mere continuance of a society against the advantages of a less stable system which may open the way to greater progress and be the transition to a better type of society? Or, again (it is really the same problem in other words), which organism is to be preferred, when there is a conflict between the interests of two or more? These are difficulties; but they are far less than those arising out of the old utilitarian formula. It is only in quite exceptional cases that the individual needs to consider the extinction of his nation's independence or the abolition of the privileges of his social caste and the merging of it in some possibly higher organism: and it is well that, in moments of reflection, he should consider whether *esprit de corps* may not lead him to ascribe an excessive value to some society that may have served its purpose in the past and may be standing between him and a higher type of patriotism. He must make very sure, however, that his judgment is based on the principle of



the well-being of some social organism, actual or possible, and not upon irresponsible individual sentiment. In the moment of action most persons are not likely to ponder such questions, and it would generally be unwise to do so. Casuistry cannot be altogether escaped, but it will be of a less dangerous kind, if it only turns on such rare conflicts of allegiance than if it be required and promoted by the assumption of an infallible and absolute Law of Nature or by the theory that a sum or quantity of pleasures has to be sought after and portioned out to individuals. On the principles of evolutionary ethics, the discovery of the likings of a majority, the counting of heads, is not an essential part of the moral standard, but at most a convenient escape from dangerous disputes. The habit of yielding to a majority, till we can alter that majority by persuasion, is a security for stability and peace, and does not concede that majorities are always, or generally, in the right. Evolutionary ethics certainly do not entitle us to say that democracy is the best form of government, but they lift the controversy out of the region of prejudice and sentiment and compel us to ask what institutions in any given case best further social cohesion and harmony without hindering the possibility of reform, if change should become necessary.

Democracy, it has been said, is only a form of government. In the strict and original sense of the term that is certainly true: and it is important to be reminded that democratic institutions are not an end in themselves for the attainment of which everything else ought to be sacrificed. They are merely a means, a piece of machinery, a contrivance by which their advocates suppose that certain good results may be obtained and certain bad results avoided. In many respects democratic institutions may be accepted not as good in themselves, but as less mischievous or dangerous than anything that could in the circumstances be got instead of them. Democracy was defined by a great man on a memorable occasion as "government of the people by the people for the people." Abraham Lincoln knew well the advantage to his country, in a crisis, of great political power being left in the hands of one strong man: and I do not suppose that, with his remarkable freedom from abstract prejudices, he valued popular government save as



usually the best means for securing the common welfare among a fairly intelligent people of strongly conservative instincts. "*For* the people" is the end of government, the professed end of all governments, if we take "the people" to mean the whole community; and this end may be missed through the stupidity or indifference or short-sighted passion of a majority under democratic institutions as well as by the prejudices or selfishness of a despot or a ruling caste.

Democracy as the name of a form of government includes many different types: and all generalisations about it are therefore risky as are also all inferences drawn from the character and history of the democracies of the past to those of the present, or from what happens in one country to what is likely to happen in another. Democracy, in any careful use of the term, could certainly not be a primitive type of government, as the practice and the idea of rule, of superiority and inferiority, which government involves, could not begin with an equality between the members of a society. Equality is not suggested by the habits of gregarious lower animals, nor by what we can learn of the most primitive types of society among mankind. The State is an outgrowth from the clan or from the family—though we must give "family" a much wider and vaguer meaning than that of the patriarchal family of Semitic tradition or of Hindoo and early Roman law. The primitive chief is the head of his clan, leader in battle, judge in disputes, and usually priest as well. The tribe may have a more definite or a less definite organisation, according to circumstances; but it is a mistake to suppose that very backward races, who manage to live on with very little organisation because they are few and scattered, or because they inhabit mountains or forests or marshes or deserts or remote islands which secure them against most attacks from without, are a type of a happy society which nearly approaches an ideal anarchy, and to which government-tormented mankind may some day return. The necessities of defence or of expansion to meet the needs of a growing population make the real beginning of the State in its distinctive sense as something more than the family, the horde or the clan. And the first great type of State is either monarchical or an aristocracy which



is in reality a league of small monarchies. Herodotus assures his somewhat incredulous readers that one of the Persian nobles who overthrew the Magian usurper really argued in favour of democracy as the best government for the Persians; but, in spite of his assurance, we are more likely to believe that, in this interesting passage about the respective merits of democracy, aristocracy and monarchy, we have simply the earliest piece of Greek political philosophy.* The Oriental may recognise the miseries of being under an absolute king; but for him the alternative to monarchy is the rule of a priestly caste or of a band of nobles, each being sovereign in his own district. Yet in such undemocratic institutions we may see the germs out of which the idea of democracy develops. The equality of noble with noble—the idea of a "peerage"—is an idea which, beginning in the ruling caste, may filter downwards. All the world over, people imitate and adopt the fashions and the notions of those whom they look upon as their social superiors: like sheep, they follow the leader. In this way it may be truly said that an aristocracy of equals is the parent of the idea of democracy. But the actual realisation of democracy has generally been due to the work of absolute monarchy crushing before it the privileges and pretensions of noble and priest and reducing its subjects to a common level. It was so in ancient Greece, where the tyrants destroyed the old aristocracies; and it was so in modern Europe, where the absolutism and centralised power of kings weakened the feudal aristocracies, so that they ceased to stand as a breakwater between the extreme types of monarchy and democracy.

The idea of democracy, like the name, comes to us from the Greeks; but Greek democracies were everywhere, according to modern terminology, slave-holding "aristocracies," and it was indeed only the institution of slavery which made direct democracy possible as a form of government in ancient city states. The labour of slaves secured for the mass of free citizens such leisure for war and politics and such sentiment of being a ruling class as was elsewhere only known to a caste of nobles. The idea of equal right to share in government

* Herodotus iii. 80-82.



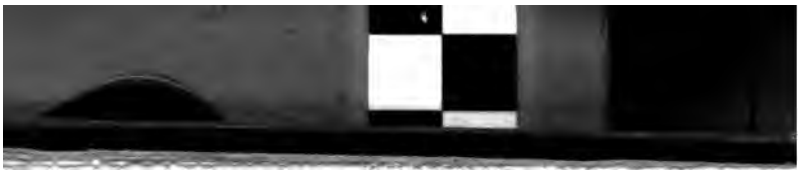
could, so far as we can see, only originate by contrast with some class of persons regarded as inferior. We never perceive anything distinctly except by contrast. The mere fact of not being a slave, the mere fact of being civilised among barbarians, the mere fact of being a white man among black or brown or red men, gives a feeling of superiority (often, in large part, illusory) which makes every member of this superior caste more ready to acknowledge every other member of it as, in some sense, a peer.

We have taken the term "democracy" from the Greeks, and adapted it to mean a form of government in which political power belongs to a majority of all the permanent inhabitants, at least of all the adult males. So far, democracy is more extreme in character in the modern than in the ancient sense. In other respects we have made it less extreme: for we are content to call a constitution democratic if it gives the suffrage to every full citizen, although only a few may ever have any practical opportunity of exercising deliberative or executive functions, even in local matters. Representative government is the greatest political invention (if we may use such a term) which the world has yet known; it is the most valuable "variation," and has brought about a species of constitution which did not exist in antiquity. It has removed a great part of the danger and instability of democracy, and it alone has made it possible for vast nations to enjoy internal peace without submitting to that absolutism of one man, which, however beneficial at times and for a time, is certain to produce torpor and decay. The citizen of a modern nation does not, indeed, lead so exciting a political existence as he would have done had he belonged to ancient Athens, where every citizen, one might say, was a member of parliament and had his chance of being in the ministry. The daily paper, the public meeting, and a rare visit to the polling-booth, are dull substitutes. Modern patriotism is not so immediately stimulated by sight and sound: it needs more reflection and more imagination, if it is to be kept alert and active. The Swiss "Referendum" and "Initiative" are sometimes advocated on the ground that they bring back direct democracy in the only manner in which this can be adapted to large

political communities. Now, personally, I think the "Referendum" (not the "Initiative," to which there are many special objections) may, under certain conditions, be a useful supplement to (not a substitute for) parliamentary legislation; though we must not expect that an institution which has grown up under the special conditions and traditions of Switzerland would prove equally well adapted to other soils and climates. But I certainly think that no argument for it whatever is to be found in the fact that it means "pure and direct democracy."* If history can teach us anything—and it is from the details of history, and not from the wide formulæ of biological sociology that we can safely learn—it teaches that "pure" democracy may be very corrupt, and that it is an unstable form of government unless under the simple conditions of some small, thinly-populated country, with a stationary population, not altered by immigration, and therefore tenacious of old habits. At its very best, pure and direct democracy is open to the objection that in many matters it is likely to be excessively conservative and adverse to progress. At its worst, there seems hardly a limit to the folly, corruption, and tyranny to which it may give rise.

All government must be government by the few over the many. The only question is, how are the most suitable few to be found? The ideal government must always be "aristocracy," in the literal sense of the term—*i.e.* government by the best —"the best" meaning not the best scientific investigators, nor the best artists and poets, nor the best generals, nor the best and most pious divines, nor the most eloquent orators, nor (though they may think it) the best and most successful journalists, but the best for the special work of making and administering laws. This ideal of aristocracy, however, gives no necessary sanction to the privileged rule of an hereditary caste. An hereditary caste decays and degenerates, under the artificial conditions of civilisation, if not constantly recruited from without: that is the lesson both of biology and of history. And the methods by which hereditary castes have generally been recruited, through new "creations" or marriages outside

* This argument is used *e.g.* by Mr M'Crackan in his "Rise of the Swiss Republic," p. 353.

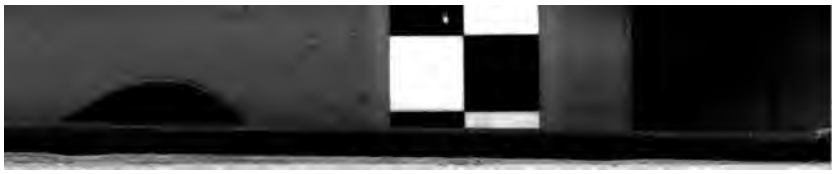


the caste, have not been regulated by the scientific care or skill of the gardener or the breeder of animals. A class of persons with a traditional interest in the business of government is, however, a very great advantage to a country; but the influence of such a class is greatest and is least apt to provoke suspicion or dislike when its members depend, in some degree at least, upon popular election for their tenure of political power. A small number of persons elected by the many, and in their turn directly or indirectly determining the very few to whom administrative functions are to be delegated—this is not perhaps an ideal state, nor is it the most strictly democratic form of realising the sovereignty of the people; but this representative democracy, which may include in it monarchical and aristocratic elements, is the best average constitution for civilised human beings, if they have got accustomed to its working and are sufficiently united by a general patriotic sentiment to have among them only constitutional parties and not anti-constitutional factions. Representative democracy is undoubtedly not suited to the lower races of mankind at present, and some of them may never be fit for it at all; for though all mankind are social animals, they are not all in the fullest sense "political animals." Even where experience of self-government might seem to make it a perfectly safe form, we sometimes see a tendency in the "government of the people by the people for the people" to degenerate into a government of the people by the "boss" for the speculator. When, however, the corruptions and the scandals of a democracy are branded, it must always be remembered that under popular government, with keen rivalries and unmuzzled journalists competing in sensational noise, much more will be heard about corruptions and scandals than under other more apparently decorous forms of government, and sometimes a little more than the bare truth.

"The great tide of democracy is rolling on, and no hand can stay its majestic course." This sort of thing has been said by many people besides the rhetorician whose words I quote. Democracy is regarded, by many who dread it, as well as by its enthusiasts, as "inevitable." The inference, if based upon historical reflection, is based only upon the history



of the last hundred years. What does seem true is that the elements for a revival of anything like feudal aristocracy or feudal monarchy have disappeared; and thus natural selection may seem to have decided for democracy by the extinction of these rival types. But the experience of the past and certain tendencies observable in the present make it quite possible that there may be a considerable future for monarchy based upon democracy—monarchy of a more or less constitutional type. The mass of mankind crave visible symbols of authority, and they are more given to worship a hero, or what they take for one, than the members of a privileged governing class (for the most enduring republics have been aristocracies): and the failures of democratic institutions to satisfy the cravings of distress and discontent, may in many cases lead to the old story of "the people's friend" becoming the despot. "Pure democracy" especially may mean only the right of the most easily deceived to elect a tyrant or to sanction a usurper. Impatience under the slowness of reform in constitutionally governed countries is always a source of danger to free institutions. The benevolent despot may do more for the people, and may do it more rapidly and in a more enlightened way, than the people can for themselves; but there is always the risk that his successor may not be as benevolent, or that he may be a weak man holding the sceptre of the strong—and that is about the worst thing that can happen. The slowness of constitutional government is safer in the long run than the quick changes wrought by a tyrant, one or many. We do not expect to find our ideal state in a philosopher-king in any literal sense. The permanent truth in Plato's dream is this, that good government can only be found when the laws and administration are based upon sound knowledge. No business can prosper, and certainly not the business of government, unless the expert is trusted, and scientific knowledge is allowed to direct practical policy. The mass of mankind feel wants and cravings, but have very vague or crude notions of how these are to be satisfied. That a people with some education and some traditional habits of self-government in local matters should have a voice in determining who are to be their legislators and administrators is



reasonable, and is often necessary as a check upon tyranny and selfishness. But that the mass of the people should dictate the details of policy or administration is unreasonable; and the attempt to make the people self-governing in this sense can only injure a nation's prosperity in the long run, and therefore on the principles of evolutionary ethics must be wrong.

Every one at all acquainted with history or comparative politics will admit the enormous gain to Great Britain in its permanent non-party civil service. The parliamentary head of the department brings the changing currents of public opinion through safe and regulated channels to freshen administration and to prevent the stagnation of a bureaucracy; so that the country has the advantage of the experienced official without being completely at his mercy. It has been pointed out that the experience of trade-unions has led them away from the abstract principle that one man is as good as another (the principle on which extreme Greek democracies elected officials by lot) to the practical conclusion that business can only be managed well by a special class of professional experts.* It may be found impracticable to introduce the expert directly into the work of legislation—the electorate being apt to suspect the self-interest of a professional class, and a professional class having often a narrow outlook beyond their own subject. The lawyer and the engineer have the advantage of dealing with highly technical matters, and are more easily left alone by popular agitation. The physician, the educationalist, the economist, are more exposed to the risk of having their advice disregarded because of some widespread sentiment, prejudice, or superstition. The only remedy under democracy for distrust in the expert is the diffusion of scientific knowledge. The more soundly educated a man is, the more likely is he to be aware of his own ignorance outside his special studies, and the more ready to accept the authority of the special students in other departments. The most difficult class of persons to deal with are those who are just sufficiently roused from the apathy of

* *Cf.* Sidney and Beatrice Webb, "Industrial Democracy," ii. pp. 843, 844.



complete ignorance to be keenly critical and suspicious of authority: and this class of the slightly educated (it would be exaggeration to call them "half-educated") possesses great influence in democracy. But there is no reason for the despair which arises from the disappointed hopes of the enthusiasts for democracy or from the regrets of those who look back on the aristocracies and old *régimes* of the past, when distance has softened their outlines. Any education, however elementary and imperfect, any interest in religion, or in anything beyond the mere animal struggle to live, any capacity for grasping the common weal as an end to be looked to, is a soil in which ideas may be sown and in which they may grow up. The thinker, the "philosopher" in Plato's sense, who feels the mission to serve his nation, but who finds that the multitude will only listen to leaders who use the phrases that are familiar to it, need not wait for the unlikely chance of an absolute king who will call him to office: he may even now "descend into the cave," and by educational work or popular writing help the growth of a sounder and healthier public opinion. I do not mean that every chemist should leave his laboratory, and every scholar neglect his historical researches, in order to give magic-lantern lectures in village school-rooms. It is not every one who has the gift of missionary work, and the "call" to it. What I mean is that the original researcher should never undervalue the social utility of the populariser. It is a very bad thing in any country if there is a complete gap between an educated few, wrapped up entirely in their own self-culture, and a multitude, many of whom are eager for light, but who are left to the heated harangues of the narrow enthusiast, or to the speeches of the party politician, who needs to be a very strong man indeed, in order to be a teacher and not a flatterer.

Admitting that there is an inevitable tendency towards democracy, we must avoid the fatalism which sometimes results from the first crude application of scientific conceptions to human society. The spectacle of the onward rush of forces that seem independent of the individual is apt to paralyse initiative, and to make us forget that variations due



to conscious thought and deliberate purpose are among the materials for sociological natural selection. In human, as distinct from animal, evolution, ideas and ideals become factors in the process. Free discussion is the struggle for existence on the intellectual plane. Ideas can, however, only influence conduct and mould institutions, when they gather round them feelings and impulses. "Intellect alone moves nothing," said Aristotle: an idea by itself is never an efficient cause. Ideas must be gradually worked into people's minds, and must grow a part of the permanent self in order to become significant factors in the habitual standards of judgment and the habitual motives of conduct. Education is this process of working ideas into the mind. "We must educate our masters," was said somewhat cynically perhaps; but it remains the truest precept for those who are apt to turn away in disgust from the politics of a democratic state. There is an ethical danger in the merely materialistic view of history which ignores the distinction between the blind processes of mere nature and the partly conscious process of human evolution. There is a danger also in the false idealism which either shrinks from contact with the rude and unpleasant facts of life or does not recognise the material conditions under which the realisation of ideals is made possible, but by which it is at the same time restricted.

"Democracy means properly a form of government." It is well to be reminded of this, to be reminded that parliaments, and county-councils, and parish-councils, and the right to vote, are only machinery, means to an end, not things to be prized or feared on their own account. But it is not quite true that democracy is *only* a form of government. There is a democratic spirit that may prevail where the form of government contains many undemocratic elements, and may be absent where the machinery is professedly democratic. This democratic spirit may be supposed to be expressed in the three famous, but ambiguous, words, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Liberty has, indeed, been too often taken in the merely negative sense of absence of State-action—a principle which, if worked out consistently, would mean anarchy, and a return to savage life, but which, when



applied to a modern society established on the basis of existing economic and legal institutions, and under democratic government, means the unfettered industrial and commercial struggle for existence, leading to the social and political preponderance of wealth. Democracy in this sense means plutocracy. Liberty, however, admits of a positive ethical meaning—the fullest possible development of the individual's physical, intellectual, and moral potentialities. In this sense the slave is not free, but neither is the "free" labourer, if he has no training for healthy self-culture and insufficient opportunities even for quiet home life. In this sense of liberty, the state has very extensive functions, and extremely democratic constitutions do not necessarily fulfil these functions better than less democratic constitutions, if the latter are permeated by this ideal of freedom.

Equality, again, may be used for claims of exact equality in every respect, claims which are incompatible with social stability and progress; but equality may simply mean that the ethical ideal, just now expressed by liberty or freedom, should be open to every one — not that every one is, as a matter of fact, fit to attain to it. As already pointed out, this ideal of equality arose among the members of a privileged class. This is a necessity in the case of such ideals. The isolated prophet must arise, marked out from his fellows, before anyone can wish that all the Lord's people should be prophets; there must be separate kings and priests before there can be a vision of redeemed humanity as kings and priests unto God; there must be the few who are noblemen or gentlemen, in order to suggest the desire for the education of a gentleman open to all who prove themselves fit for it, or the poet's dream of the nobility of all mankind.

Of these democratic ideals the greatest is Fraternity. The narrow exclusiveness of families or clans, for whom the stranger was the enemy, produced in time the ideal of a brotherhood of mankind—an ideal that may indeed be used in anarchical fashion to break up the ethical bonds of smaller social groups which alone can discipline human beings for the membership of wider circles. But the ideal of fraternity may also serve to correct a great deal of the bad metaphysics and

unpractical politics due to abstract or rhetorical applications of the ideals of liberty and equality; "fraternity," "brotherhood," may serve to recall the needs of mankind as a family. In the family it would be cruelty to give the children equal rights and responsibilities with their elders, or to leave them to their own devices; and the family ideal of the state may save us from the cruelty that results from non-interference with the more helpless of our own people or the non-intervention which would leave the lower races to the native despot, the slave-raider, or the European adventurer, unchecked by the control of civilised government. These lower races are our younger brothers, they are like children, as their best friends tell us, and they require paternal government in spite of all democratic theories.

We cannot predict the political map of future centuries. Many unexpected things are sure to happen. But, so far as can at present be foreseen by us, there is (as Kant saw a hundred years ago) no hope for durable peace, except through a federation of the civilised nations of the world, each nation being itself a "republic"—*i.e.* constitutionally governed. The alternative of a universal Empire would, as in the case of the Roman Empire, mean degeneration, and disarmed civilisation might again fall before militant barbarians. But outside our league or federation of civilised peoples, with more or less democratic constitutions, there will probably always be large regions of the world occupied chiefly by races unfit for full self-government; and these must for their own sakes be governed in some more or less imperial and despotic fashion. To leave the lower races to themselves is impossible, now at all events when our earth has been nearly all explored. The growth of population in temperate climates is alone sufficient to produce a demand for the food supplies of the tropics. In tropical climates labour must be done by the coloured man, but it has to be supervised and directed by the white man. A tropical country left to independence is a white tyranny or a black anarchy. Some control from constitutionally governed countries, some system like that of our Crown Colonies, is the best solution yet reached.* Under

* It is satisfactory to find that thoughtful citizens of the United States of



good paternal government the main difficulty, indeed, is the rapid increase of protected lower races.

Will democracies prove themselves capable of taking up "the white man's burden" in the highest sense? This is one of the serious questions that confront us. It will not be settled by appeals to sentiment or the rights of man. The ideas of evolutionary ethics help us only in so far as they tend to "clear our minds of cant," and lead us to abandon some of the traditional phrases of the democratic creed, to accept the lessons of experience, and to face the problems of human society without exaggerated expectations, but without selfishness and without despair.

America, under the new responsibilities which the occupation of the Philippines are forcing on them, have come, in spite of traditional dogmas about natural rights, to recognise that some such treatment of barbarous races is alone wise and just. See the discussion on the government of dependencies in "The Foreign Policy of the United States: Addresses and Discussions at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Political and Social Science," April 7-8, 1899.

THE NEW INTERNATIONALISM

G. H. PERRIS

IN opening an inquiry into the right relations of the states and peoples of the world we reach one of the most difficult and at the same time one of the most urgent parts of our subject. It is difficult not only by reason of its native complexity, but also because in its ethical aspects it is least familiar; because it is bound up with many inveterate prejudices and coloured by some of the most active passions of our time. Its chief urgency lies in the crying need of guidance in regard to a set of problems with which every great Western State is now daily brought face to face. The age is full of baffling contradictions, but who could blame the scepticism and apathy of the man in the street when he saw a Tsar standing as the chief apostle of Peace, Socialist leaders pandering to a narrow Chauvinism, the successors of Gladstone lauding the battle of Omdurman, the one of the two great republics based on the idea of "government only by consent" forcing its rule upon obstinate islanders in the far Pacific, the other, whose motto is "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," sacrificing civil justice on the altar of military "honour"? The question is urgent also because the facts and principles of external policy have of late so profoundly affected internal affairs that it is impossible to separate the two aspects, for instance, of government, or of military establishments, or of the economics of trade. This confusion is responsible for something like an eclipse of organised Liberalism, and there seems to be no chance of any new concentration of progressive forces till it is cleared up. Our whole view of social evolution is involved; and there will be grave implications in the domain of education and culture. Fragments of truth are



proclaimed in a hundred Little Bethels; the need of the times is a clear synthesis and a strenuous ethical statesmanship which will give the Western world, in a few plain principles, hope of escape from its present troubles.

I

The insufficiency of the older internationalism must be recognised. But the cosmopolitan spirit is not to be dismissed as a mere fashion of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It has its roots deep down in the history of the race. It must have existed among the thoughtful few from the very first, from the day when the expansion of settled social groups by way of commerce and war gave importance to external relations, and the growth of industry and property taught the value of peace as well as of power. It would be enriched as the development of competing monarchies, military classes, aristocracies, and priesthoods proceeded, and as their interests came to be differentiated from the common human interests. If Aristotle could have looked back over the history of Egypt from the first to the last of the Pharaohs—a period twice as long as the Christian Era—he might have left us yet another series of lessons drawn from the case of a country which sustained a high civilisation over an unprecedented period, until drawn into wars of revenge and schemes of conquest. The stories of the rise and fall of Phoenicia and Carthage are eloquent of the destiny of military plutocracies, even when masked under republican forms. Generalisation about these early polities is rightly suspected, for only details can be exactly known, and we can only catch dim glimpes of the working of character and motive through the medium of political and economic circumstance. Yet the sanctions of historical philosophy must always be desired; and, after all, ethics is not a system of abstract thought, but, above all, a study of everyday life as it has been on the earth.

Of the three great foundation-stones of our own civilisation — Greek culture, Roman politics, the Judaic-Christian Ethic,—and the rise of modern Europe from this base, it is possible to speak more confidently. Around the cradle of the



West all the fundamental principles of our present social life came into play, at least in the mind of the governing classes; and that cosmopolitan heritage is still unexhausted. Amid rival schemes of citizenship, government, and justice, the ideal of brotherhood and commonwealth entered definitively into the human consciousness. Greece served it with her splendid intellect, endowed it with her love of freedom and equality, of self-mastery and independent activity, tested it in many fields of indomitable research, and glorified it with her incomparable art. Rome gave it her iron will, her instinct for order, stability, authority, her genius for government and law. Finally, at the necessary hour, the Jew brought in the moral solvent of his passion for righteousness, and carried the narrower idea of democracy down to the lowest levels of the popular life. Subsequent progress has consisted in the main of a long commingling of these three impulses, together with the stronger elements of Teutonic, Latin, and Slavic character, in ceaseless ebb and flow; a gradual absorption of surrounding despotisms and anarchies; and the slow evolution of a comity of nations, autonomous as to their internal affairs, but increasingly responsive to the same spiritual ideas. The tale of these twenty-five centuries is like a long process of fermentation and distillation. In the first seething cauldron there is riotous disturbance and immense waste; in the next and the next the addition of newly-found raw material produces fresh turmoil, but the basic liquor is gaining consistency and clearness always, and the chemical changes within it become less violent. Not that this cessation of violence implies any cessation of change, of what we call progress. As the supplies of foreign material diminish, there is the laboratory, the store of invention and tradition, to fall back upon; and if the number of chemical elements and their possible combinations is incalculable, much more so is that of the variations of human character. Our concern, however, will be with the distillation of fine essences instead of the brewing of strong beer.

It is only in the underworld that "nothing succeeds like success." All the material triumphs of ancient days sink into insignificance beside the fruit of three tragic failures: Greece



had to be broken up that the Greek spirit might move freely among the tribes of men. Rome, in her fall, her more immediate mission of consolidation accomplished, entered upon a larger empire. The Crucified Jew has ruled from his tomb a kingdom larger than those of the Pharaohs and the Caesars put together. And the Christian Church, with its crude object-lessons of self-sacrifice and expiation, has prepared the way for a still fuller ideal of human unity. These three supreme influences had to sink deep down into the common mind and ferment there along with the similar but rudimentary moral characteristics of the North. Every element and variation had to be tried in turn, in every kind of environment, till a series of combinations of some stability were formed; and then these unions, two continents having been tamed in the process, had to turn themselves back upon Asia and Africa, to meet there a yet more difficult test.

II

Who will rescue history from the political anecdotist? Some economic interpretations are at last forthcoming; but what is wanted is a philosophic view of moral and intellectual, as well as economic, motives in the growth of society, of the volcanic forces that threw up the great men and great organisations, and produced the crises the mere externalities of which preoccupy the schools. A few figures — Cyrus, Alexander, Augustus, Charlemagne, Cromwell, Napoleon — a series of State structures—Empire, Republic, Kingdom, Confederation —hold the undiscerning eye, a mysterious finger seeming to jerk the pendulum of our world-clock now to this extreme and now to that, and the slow advance of the unseen mass of humanity passing almost unobserved. The mind constantly engaged upon political organisation—the deeds of monarchs and statesmen, changes in forms of government, and so on—always exaggerates its movements to and fro between heterogeneity and homogeneity. Thus the fact of nationality has been much exaggerated on the side of structure, while its inner character and function has received only slight consideration. The average history is a series of national compartments; the



great under-currents of popular life—industry and commerce, science and the arts, religion and culture—find, as such, only a few belated students. The fact is that nationality is a very young form of organisation, and it is already breaking down in favour of larger unions. Goths and Franks were only the ploughs for the Papacy and its phantasmal "Empire." Britain and Germany yielded more easily to Christian missionaries than they had done to the Imperial legions, and Russia humbly gave her national strength to the service of Byzantine Christianity. Everywhere the learning of the Church, going abroad under the girdle of the priest and the breastplate of the warrior, tamed the outer as well as the inner barbarian. Chivalry, the Crusades, the Mediaeval Epic, had to play upon the ruins of Roman Europe—ruins which the Church and its political dependency were alike powerless to rebuild—ere, after centuries of simmering disorder, a new movement of integration could begin. This came mainly in three ways. The Crusades resulted in a phenomenal expansion of commerce (including industry, banking, and exchange). The fall of Constantinople led to the Renaissance, a revival of art and learning in the widest sense, which again led to the Reformation, a sweeping revolt against relics of false authority, albeit rather on Jewish than Greek lines. Finally, some fortunately situated feudal groups, touched by the new opportunities, burst out into a larger organic form—the nation.

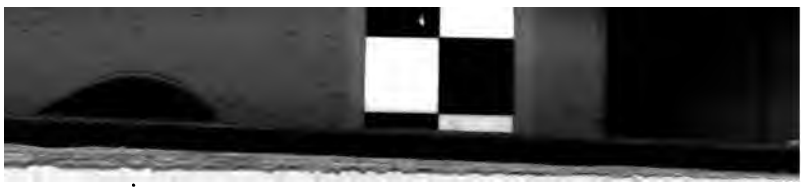
Affinity of race, language, religion, customs, traditions of a great past, community of material interests, the possession of natural frontiers, and like necessities of defence or opportunities of profit—such are the motives which may be read in or into the beginnings of a modern nation; but the case is hardly to be found in which any one of these factors has been sufficient in itself or in which all of them converge,—save in a later stage, to the making of which custom and sheer inertia have largely contributed. Thus a scientific definition of nationality can hardly be found. As Professor Sidgwick says ("Elements of Politics," Chap. XIV.):

"I can find no particular bond of union among those that chiefly contribute to the internal cohesion of a strongly-united society—belief in a common origin, possession of a common language and literature, pride in common



historic traditions, community of social customs, community of religion—which is really essential to our conception of a Nation-State. . . . Some of the leading modern nations—so called—are notoriously of very mixed race. . . . The memories of a common political history . . . cannot be counted upon to produce the required effect. . . . Community of language and community of national sentiment are not necessarily connected. At certain stages in the history of civilisation religious belief has been a powerful nation-making force and powerful also to disintegrate nations; but these stages seem to be now past in the development of the leading West-European and American States. I think, therefore, that what is really essential to the modern conception of a State which is also a Nation is merely that the persons composing it should have, generally speaking, a consciousness of belonging to one another, of being members of one body, over and above what they derive from the mere fact of being under one government."

If this analysis be accepted, and it appears to be irrefutable, it will be seen that the interests and influences that make a nation are the same interests and influences which in variable proportion have made other social groups both smaller and larger; everywhere and throughout history they have been at work in some degree. The idea of the spirit of nationality being something new, exclusive, and final, is a myth; or rather it is in part a superstition of more or less ignorant sentimentalists, and in part a pretence of certain classes of persons who are in various ways interested in the maintenance of the superstition. The same superstition, springing from the same base of material or moral interest, was seen in the village community, on a smaller scale, but with cruder intensity; in the clan and tribe; it belongs as well to the province that is less than a nation as to the race that is more. Like every other popular sentiment it has its fine and its base elements. The highest passion for freedom and the grossest pride of power have run into this artificial mould. To Dr Johnson patriotism was "the last refuge of a scoundrel"; to Renan (after he had pursued an analysis very similar to that which we have found it convenient to quote from Professor Sidgwick) the nation appeared as "a living soul, a spiritual principle, a daily plebiscite." But Renan would not have denied that this description would apply equally well to other forms of social union—to the city of Paris as well as to the French Republic. The Cockney regards the rustic of the shires in very much the same way that



Mr Chamberlain regards Mr Kruger. Johnson's scoff and Renan's sentiment are both true; but they have no exclusive bearing upon nationality, for they represent common human characteristics. While the utmost unit of social growth is the village, the parochial spirit is naturally dominant. The spirit of nationality is the most active characteristic of the stage of national consolidation. When a stage is reached in which the most vital relationships outreach these early limits, we must look to an idea which carries the earlier inspiration out into wider and nobler applications. The vogue of Imperialism represents in part—though, as we shall see, only in part—a crude but genuine popular perception of the unreality of the ancient national barriers. Ideals which do not march with the extension of human needs and relationships are dead, and may easily become the cause of disease and decay.

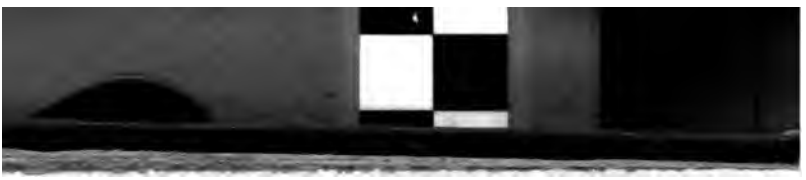
Historically we should find that the most general feature of the national growth was its representation of a partly instinctive, partly conscious, sense that any union, however crude, was better than chaos. There is in the nation nothing of the final necessity attaching to the institution of the family. The word really covers groups different both in origin, form, and function; and these groups have nearly always been highly instable. In fact, it is a real stage, but only a stage in human union. The important thing for our present purpose is to discover why nationality rose into prominence, and why it is now declining as a type of social organisation.

III

Not to be betrayed into a discussion of the relative importance of economic and other factors, it will, perhaps, be admitted that national union has two main historical *raisons d'être*: the advantage of co-operation (in industry, government, and defence) to the masses who contribute to it; and the advantage of secure property (in persons, land, or money) to the classes who direct it. It will then be seen that the growing preponderance of the former over the latter advantage—mass co-operation over class property—is the chief characteristic of the passage from nationality to international democracy.



The common nucleus of the early nation is an undifferentiated property class—a monarchy entrenched in a military caste. On the black wings of war—which served the family, civic, and industrial groups so ill—royalty sailed into power. The Capetians made the French State, the Normans the English, the Romanoffs the Russian. But no man or family could long monopolise this immense power. Gradually it became differentiated, shares of power and privilege falling to aristocracy, ecclesiasticism, and capitalism, as the needs of government, religious sentiments, and the race for wealth assumed new importance. In that museum of antiquities which we call Europe there are preserved to this day fine specimens of every one of these types of State organisation. Thanks only to personal and historical prestige, the House of Hapsburg still presides over an artificial and precarious union of races and language—or religion—groups. Royalty had to be taken as the condition of German and Italian unity. It has even, during the present century, made experiments in self-regarding international action: thus princes have been imposed upon Greece, Belgium, and Bulgaria; the Drei Kaiser Bund was mainly a personal alliance; the Concert of Europe was largely controlled by the Imperial Houses; and intermarriage has made Queen Victoria the "grandmother of Europe." It is easy to misunderstand this apparent revival of monarchy, however. In some small ways there has been a real reaction, but kingship lost its crown when the idea of divine right was exploded; it entered upon a period of decay when it had to stand beside successful republicanism and accept it as an equal. The Russian autocracy, sole survivor of its kind, would have fallen long ago but for the support of the Greek Church, the absence of an independent aristocracy, and the lack of large town populations. The abolition of serfdom helped it for the moment, but at its own ultimate peril. The rapid growth of industrialism is undermining all mediaeval forms of government; and there are separate political and religious revolts against a false and cruel authority; great changes are preparing. And, outside Russia, monarchy exists in Europe only by consent. Its long survival is only singular to the man who sits in a study and judges all men by himself. The true citizen of the world



recognises, however much he may lament, the readiness with which the average man obeys any masterly fellow, the love of the decorative and ceremonial (to say nothing of *panem et circenses*), and the ease with which gratitude degenerates into the poorer sort of "loyalty."

In one way or another the nation became, relatively speaking, an oasis of social order, protected against outer attack and the violence of minor groups within. That was the necessary prelude to further progress. While royalty does anything to safeguard the commonwealth, the Civil List seems a very small insurance premium. Alas! the Civil Lists are a trifling part of the bill. If Europe has not been destroyed in the process of royalist-national grouping, it has been mainly because certain checks and balances and certain compensations were forthcoming, because the selfish energies of violent men were diverted into new and far distant channels. The growth of art, scholarship, and science, the individualism of the Reformation, produced a new courage of thought and action, especially a vigorous protest against worldly despotism and corruption. The contest of Protestantism against Catholicism, both international forces, while it strengthened certain dynasties, implied a recognition of a superior authority; the new commercial enterprises slowly disintegrated feudal organisation and built up a powerful middle class; while adventure on the high seas and conquest in America and the Far East gave outlets for the turbulent spirits of Western Europe. In the early morning of the Industrial Revolution, which was to effect yet more radical changes, the cultured societies of Europe, sick of war and oppression, turned again toward a humanistic and cosmopolitan philosophy. Goldsmith lauded the "Citizen of the World." Goethe said he did not know what patriotism meant. Kant (*e.g.* in his "Ideas for a Universal History," 1789) ranged himself with the fathers of "international law," foretelling that primitive savagery would be progressively modified between states as it had already been modified between individuals, towns, provinces, and that the existing crude relations would be resolved by the union of the peoples in a world-federation whose great social end would be the welfare and progress of humanity as a whole. Dry and bookish as was the spirit of



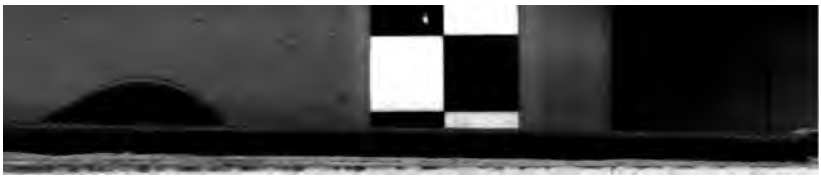
the eighteenth century, ill-based as were its utopias, narrow as was its economic programme, it was in many ways a grand *entr'acte*, and its men of genius make a very long calendar.

But what consolation had the *salons* of London and Paris to give to the victims of new machinery and old feudalism? The world is not to be saved by a circle of academicians. Cosmopolitanism had to develop from an academic and artificial to a popular and organic ideal. The older internationalism had no substantial content; it was a vague sentiment, related indeed to the great fact of war and to the spread of culture, but leaving many of the most important relations of life out of consideration. For it to develop from a sentiment to a faith and a policy, it had to get its *pied à terre*, its hold upon the common people; and this could only come, in the first place, through the growth of the national bond, and then through the purest ideal of nationalism, a series of free co-operative nationalities.

IV

We are still so near to the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars that it is impossible to exactly measure their results, even within the limits of our subject. The evil part of the heritage looks the greatest, at first sight. Hunger had taught the French peasantry more of criticism and uprooting than they could have learned of Rousseau. It was when the day came for reconstruction that they went astray, and great men learned in one awful lesson the folly of leaving the masses outside their calculations. Napoleon had little difficulty in turning a campaign against the old *régime* at home and in the neighbouring countries into a career of universal dominion, with himself in the *rôle* of Caesar Redivivus. The "career open to talents" served to show how dangerous a thing talent in the raw may be. No more dreams of the Sanctity of the People, of a Paradise to be regained by a vote of the National Convention! The succeeding century has supplied many more illustrations of the futility of the merely mechanical or political conception of Democracy, and of the merely National appeal.

Yet the "Nationalist" movement, the seeds of which the



French armies sowed broadcast, has been no mere reaction. Among its higher apostles it has had only partial reference to the "independence" of the nation, and has been consciously an essay toward a wider solidarity. The clause in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" which asserts that "the principle of *all* sovereignty resides in the nation" looks like a contradiction of the cosmopolitan sentiment which, to a large extent, inspired the Revolution; but the Declaration was written in no private or proprietory spirit. It was written for the whole Western world; and, read as a whole, it could not be taken to mean that State separatism was the last word of human reason on the subject of social organisation. The fierce fire of patriotism kindled by Buonaparte's campaigns and the consequent array of the other Powers against France, would, but for the war of 1870, have sunk very low by now. Instead of liberating the rest of Europe for an era of cosmopolitan democracy, the perverted Revolution delivered it over to the tender mercies of a new tribe of military and autocratic "saviours." In Germany, which had been for centuries a cock-pit haunted by the ghost of Imperial Rome, it was certain that the revulsion toward union and authority would be most extreme, and that it would be especially directed against France. The beginnings of modern Germany were cemented with English gold; but generally England (whose "patriotism" resolved itself mainly into fear of Napoleon and expectation of commercial advantage from the exhaustion of the Continent) was content to punish France in more distant fields—in Canada, in India. To Napoleon we also owe the revival of the decadent Tsardom of Russia and its growth into the strongest absolutism now extant. From Russia and Germany the military and autocratic spirit has radiated during the century.

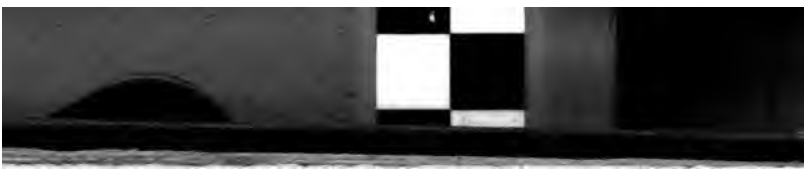
The peoples showed no such singleness of purpose as their new masters. Nationalism meant various things—a demand sometimes for concentration and union, sometimes for release and Home Rule. Nearly always it meant liberation from some existing oppression, whether of the old *régime* as in Russia, or of an alien Power as in Italy, Hungary, Poland, Ireland; and it rose afresh against later invasions. The new national sentiment, everywhere aroused, held much of the principles



of '89 in solution. Circumstance led Mazzini to use the language of nationalism, as it led English poets to rhapsodise over Greece and Italy; his thought ran in this channel because, to rouse a stagnant people to moral effort, one must appeal to those factors which we have already noticed as contributing to the formation of what is called nationality—traditions of a great past, political or economic advantage; and so on. So with all the nationalist reformers, down to Parnell. It was only when it was seen that the foes of popular rights were the same in various countries that the insufficiency of the nationalist line of popular revolt became manifest.

The ideas which France sowed in the blood of her old nobility had a more equable growth in the Anglo-Saxon colonies of the New World. The fact that the American "Declaration" and the republicanism of the United States have not saved them from extreme growths of irresponsible capitalism, and from the proclamation of an over-seas Empire, must not blind us to the powerful influence which that great experiment in moral politics has exerted during the century upon European thought. The very name "United States" was a lesson and a stimulus. Hitherto, in modern times, brave little Switzerland alone had given an example of a stable confederation possessing the virtues of the national spirit and yet reaching out toward a wider human solidarity. The United States have proved on a large, almost a continental, scale that States may be drawn together from within, as well as hammered together from without; that sovereignty may be divided by contract between local groups and a central representative organ; and that the presidency of such a union may be entrusted to men from the log cabin and the attorney's office with more chance of success than the Old-World State has under the son of a hundred titled sires. Notwithstanding capitalism and its monopolies, civic corruption, the steady inflow of aliens impoverished in mind, body, and estate, the colour problem of the South, the yellow press, and the new craze for Imperial adventure, the States represent an immense advance toward Ethical Democracy.

While the Anglo-Saxon character and the republican form of union contributed to this success, the possession of vast



tracts of open land, unencumbered with ancient institutions or even traditions, was perhaps a yet more important factor. The Old World had no such advantage; it was more than ever encumbered. Comparatively, it was stagnated. The diffusion of the wealth won by the new industrial and commercial methods and by conquest has been very slight and very slow in Europe. The awakening of the peoples to self-consciousness has been checked by repeated disappointments and strongly arrayed opposition. 'Forty-eight was one of the largest fiascos in human history; and such elements of political democracy as now exist have been obtained at the cost of terrific effort. Ridiculous survivals block every avenue of public life; and privilege, with difficulty beaten out of one, entrenches itself safely in another. Aristocracy, relieved to a large extent of its feudal duties, including the business of government, survives, an almost exclusively parasitic class. Instead of abolishing monarchy and aristocracy, as it at first promised to do, industrial capitalism seems to have temporarily merged with them, to have found them new fields of mischievous activity, and thus to have produced a reactionary coalition strong enough, for the time being, to resist almost any attack.

Among the masses, in this last year of the century, there is hardly any sign of a common hope, a common moral impulse. Scepticism has passed from the theological arena and from literature into the domain of public affairs. Popular apathy is the puzzle and the torment of sensitive men in every country where a certain standard of living has been reached. The disappointment of Parliamentary Government, and the political Liberalism which has been its inspiration, is undeniable. A Gladstone, a Gambetta, a Castelar, a Parnell, may raise the whirlwind; when they go their party falls to pieces. The newspapers still talk of "the Labour Movement"; at the present moment, at least, there is no such movement, unless we count the slow decay of the old Trades' Union idea. In the present British Parliament there is not a single independent representative of Labour; and it is a commonplace of the clubs that there will be no new social movement till the spur of trade depression is again felt.

On the Continent, as in Ireland, the failure of national



populism is complete. Poland rots, forgotten by her old champions; the Ukraïne never got the ear of the outer world; Finland is now going through the autocratic mill; Austria continues to hold an unruly team together. The tight grasp of the "mailed fist" has made Germany one, but has not made it a nation. Italy is divided between a political and an ecclesiastical sovereignty, the former preserved at the cost of a burdensome military alliance. France has paid for the sins of the Second Empire a price even heavier than her lost provinces, her war-debt, and her conscript-army—her civil integrity to wit. Spain is derelict. The little nations alone, as Björnson and many another testify, show a high degree of moral vitality.

V

A gloomy picture; yet not all gloom if we look aright, and especially if we look to the newer symptoms that dominate the old horizon of separation. While some nations have lost, others have never gained, their independence; and while, among the rest, independence has been generally won at the expense of freedom, certain solvent influences have been at work upon the sovereignty of the State where it appeared to be most secure. At one end they are no doubt influences of privilege and arbitrary authority, of class property rather than mass co-operation. In spite of all shocks, the Roman Catholic Church exercises a subtle dominion all over Central and Western Europe. And Mr Stead hardly exaggerates when he says that there are now only three effective units among the Powers — the groups headed respectively by the Franco-Russian Alliance, the Triplice, and the Anglo-American "cousins"; and only seven real capitals—London, Washington, St Petersburg, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Rome. These three huge State combinations rule Europe and her dependencies, and rule them, it must be confessed, mainly in the interests of class privilege. The great financial houses—largely in the hands of a race that has no fatherland—the great merchant princes, wield an international sway, and can hardly be said to own any national fealty.

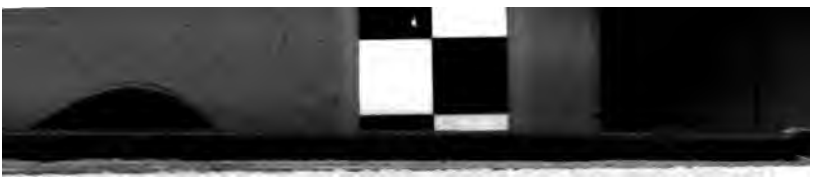


On the other hand, the body of trade and industry by which the peoples live has also become a powerful unifying force, some appearance to the contrary notwithstanding. Every shop is an object-lesson in practical cosmopolitanism. Free trade lives and grows under and through protectionist barriers. Socialism has been international from the first, in its best forms at least; and the beginnings of international trades-unionism have been laid down. What are Imperial picnics, compared with the international conferences by which State sovereignty has been modified during the century? The old racial and political animosities are not dead, but they have been tempered by the popularisation of travel, the growth of commercial and social relations, the spread of education, and the fuller co-operation of the scientists, artists, and humanitarians of all countries. Though the newspaper has conspicuously failed to realise the ideal of the pioneers of a free press, it has made the masses in each country aware of the existence, at least, of social systems and problems of which our grandfathers never dreamed. This is by far the most considerable of the enfranchisements of the century. By an almost imperceptible process, the area of the power and responsibility of the British, French, German, or American voter has been manifolded during the last generation. Naturally, it is the most recent part of the task that attracts most of his attention; and, if these new interests have involved new possibilities of strife, they have also helped to wipe out ancient prejudice. At last emerges this supreme gain: it may now be said that something like a static position has been reached throughout the home territories of the European States. If we except Austria, the Balkan countries, and Turkey, a serious war arising from European causes, and on European territory, seems highly improbable. M. Bloch may or may not be justified in his argument that such a war would be equivalent to suicide on the part of those who undertook it. The more important considerations are that the small class of men who have the power of making such a war do not want to make it, and that the conditions which favoured the emergence of great military chieftains are rapidly passing away. It is possible the next Tsar may have the makings in him of a mighty



warrior; but it is also possible that the next German Kaiser may be a pacific and progressive statesman. For reasons which we must presently examine, the little Napoleons of our day mostly gravitate outside of Europe. Caesarism is not dead; never was it more widely extended; but its grosser old-time forms have become impossible in the highly-elaborated societies of the West. The wisest members of the military and bureaucratic classes are consciously aiding the transformation. The remarkable feature of the events which began with the manifesto of Nicholas II. and culminated with the signature of the "Act Finale" of the Hague was, not the measure of public support—which, indeed, outside this country, was very small—but the sheer benevolence of this remarkable gathering of soldiers, lawyers, and diplomatists from all parts of the "civilised" world. Men who had not closely watched the direction of social evolution confidently predicted that the meeting of the envoys would but reveal irreconcilable differences of temper and interest, and that it would bring us nearer to, not take us further from, an awful conflict. Instead, the Conference surprised everybody, and the old advocates of Peace most of all, by elaborating the most complete and far-reaching scheme for the pacific settlement of international disputes ever composed in public or private. How is this fact to be explained? In part, no doubt, it was a triumph of genuine pacific sentiment. But that sentiment would never have been allowed such unprecedented display had it not been recognised in the Chanceries of Europe that war in Europe now means war on the grand scale, and that war on the grand scale no longer promises profit to the governing and privileged classes.

We must not be tempted into an enlargement of this point. A comparison of monarchy to-day with monarchy in the Middle Age will at once suggest the most important factors in this development. Pillage of a weak neighbour was then the normal and obvious means of replenishing the State coffers, mainly because it was easier to rob the foreigner than to exploit the native. The growth of population, the settlement of Europe, and the increase of wealth have changed all that. To openly pillage a neighbouring State has become difficult and risky; never was it easier to exploit a



native population. Moreover, the privileged classes in different countries have discovered their common character and common interests. When Adam Smith spoke of there being a "tacit conspiracy" on the part of employers to reduce wages, he did not mean that the individual employer spent his days and nights in the effort to cut down his wages-list, but that class self-interest created an instinctive tendency in that direction. So it may be said that there is "a tacit conspiracy" of the military and allied classes against pacific democracy. In olden times the worst fruit of this conspiracy was the horrors of warfare. To-day it is the Armed Peace backed by a powerful bureaucracy, and agricultural, industrial, and commercial Monopoly backed by Protection. Nor is there any hope of a better state till the peoples are enlightened. We may as well frankly recognise the fact that the worst evils of to-day exist by popular consent. The simple old faith in the identity of *vox populi* and *vox Dei* is no longer possible; it is not to the average working but to the highest potentiality of the popular heart that we have now to appeal.

Thus though the equilibrium is unstable, artificial, and in some ways positively immoral and dangerous, such as it is it has cost centuries of strife to attain, and it gives colour to hopes of a better future. If a European war is improbable, still more so is such a wide diversion of the stream of progress as that conducted by Buonaparte. It is not clear how autocracy is to be got rid of without resort to physical force; but it is certain that democracy is not to be inculcated by the Napoleonic method of invasion and conquest. In a raw and rudimentary form, but one vastly more important than all the Postal and Railway Unions would suggest, the United States of Europe are an accomplished fact. It is true the new balance of power leaves many crying grievances unremedied. The decay of Garibaldian and Gladstonian chivalry has, however, some justification in the general perception that war rarely results as humanists wish it to, that the era of humanitarian Quixotry is past, that any war in Europe would now entail incalculable suffering for a doubtful advantage, and that democracy must win its victories in other



fields. That there is, so far as Europe is concerned, an equilibrium of a sort for the first time since the homeward retreat of the Roman legions, is a gain not, perhaps, to be exaggerated but not, certainly, to be despised, or lightly jeopardised.

We seem to stand, as Matthew Arnold said, "between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born." The progressive West has reached, and Eastern Europe is nearing, the definitive transition-point petween feudalism and industrialism. The simple old property-class—a national monarchy supported by ecclesiasticism and aristocracy—is visibly giving place to a larger organisation of society in which industrial capitalism is for the present supreme. The Armed Peace—whether in the form of conscription, as on the Continent, or of mercenary professionalism, as in this country, —is maintained by this new governing property-class because, from the point of view of that class, it is more important to keep the masses in a state of regimental obedience than to develop their capacity as consumers and producers, and because this can be most easily accomplished by way of the old maxim: *Divide et Impera.* Hitherto these masses—only now beginning to emerge from mediaeval ignorance and traditions and habits of national enmity—have been easily hoodwinked by this huge pretence. But the opposite tradition and ideal of the heroic minority in every age—the ideal of human brotherhood and co-operative commonwealth, refined and hardened in the fires of a thousand historic crises —is entering at length into the consciousness and the will of the common people. The chief value of the scathing indictment of militarism contained in the Tsar's manifesto lay in the vulgar fact that it necessarily obtained the widest possible notice. The formal abdication of this singular young man could not have a tithe of the significance of this moral abdication of the most powerful representative of modern Caesarism.

At the moment, however, when the superstition of a real and permanent antagonism between the chief national organs of the international organism, of a real and permanent necessity for huge armies and navies, spy-systems, and diplomatic chicanery, is most imminently threatened with a fatal



exposure, it is discovered that the cunning old enemy has slipped away by the back door into another field, has there taken to himself fresh partners, and entrenched himself anew. Perverting Canning's phrase, we may say that he has called in the old heathen world, with all its opportunities of privilege and exploitation, to spoil the balance of the new ethical democracy. The self-governing nation having nearly "panned out" as a capitalist preserve, he harks back to the ancient resort of an ultra-national type of organisation in which morality is inevitably difficult, democracy is out of the question, and "the devil take the hindmost" is the undisputed law of daily life.

The Empire, to wit!

VI

It remains to consider the effect of extra-European developments upon the status and the ideals of those populations which we fondly regard as the vanguard of the race. And here it is, above all, necessary to rise beyond platform tricks and platitudes, to think and speak precisely, to separate true from false sentiment. Nothing is so much needed, and nothing is so signally lacking in contemporary politics, as a scientific analysis of Empire and Imperialism. Here we can only set down a few chief considerations, for the most part drawn from British experience.

The manufacturing class, which came into power in England with the consummation of the Industrial Revolution, reached higher than it could stand, wrought better than it knew, when it got Free Trade established as the first article of the national creed. For a short hour it seemed as if the old feud of ideal and material had been settled, as if all ancient strife and prejudice would give way before this phenomenal success in economic shop-keeping. The notion still lingers, and the Cobden Club maintains a spectral existence. But, actually, we are far advanced in the throes of a counter-revolution. The ideal, as such, had never really captured even the people who cheered the orators of the Anti-Corn Law League. Moral progress does not advance by leaps and bounds, though occasionally it may seem to do so. The poet who saw the



"happy sails" of British fleets "knitting land to land" and "enriching the markets of the Golden Year," who hailed "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world," as if they were to be enacted in the next session at Westminster, was to the last full of the old Adam of agrarian Toryism. Internationalism lacked a native base in culture and ethics. Moreover, this side of Cobden's teaching was prejudiced by its association with a dry individualism in domestic affairs. As soon as we became an industrial country, Protectionism in the narrow sense became impossible as a policy for these islands. So far as regards free importation of food and raw material, Free Trade is rather a necessity of our economic situation than a virtue of our political thought. (Witness the Protectionism of our self-governing colonies.) It is the higher and wider range of the Manchester doctrine, the faith in liberty, equality, and fraternity among nations, that has gone to pieces in the interval. Internal and external influences have co-operated in this reaction, the result of which has been to supplant the ideal of a co-operation of industrial states by that of a competition of military empires. On the Continent and in America, Protection was the natural retort of a property-class threatened by a deluge of foreign goods; and tariff wars in turn added a new stimulus to all the old causes of militarism. The blocking of markets which we had come to regard as rightfully ours, together with the rapid growth of foreign, especially of German and American, manufacturing power, constituted a more and more imminent menace to the British trade policy.

Checked in his struggle for economic supremacy by the political veto of the rival Powers, the British trader asked himself whether he, too, should not use the political machine. After all, the State is in the main only a means of permanently securing an economic advantage to those classes of the community which are politically most efficient at a given time. It was not that there was any absolute block against British trade among the advanced neighbour-nations of the West; but to maintain our advantage involved a ceaseless necessity of new invention, of ubiquitous activity, receptivity, accommodation to alien manners and methods of business. This



is where our manufacturing and trading classes are failing: it is, on an international scale, the sad story, known in every workshop, of the ousting of the old by the young. Perhaps the failure was inevitable, was only a question of time; our coal supplies cannot last for ever, and it is by no means certain that we have any other exceptional resources or abilities which would enable us to maintain such an economic supremacy as we have hitherto enjoyed. But it was expedited, it might almost be said courted, by the deliberate resort to another and lower line of activity. The emphasis in our policy passed from the idea of international exchange to that of imperial possession. There are no Protectionist barriers in savage Africa, and China can be coerced into buying cotton-cloths of a quality for which there is no longer a market even in poverty-stricken Russia. Hence a degradation of our industrial activities which counterbalances in a day all the work of all the Arts and Crafts Societies in a generation. The odd thing is that the few really cultured apostles of contemporary Imperialism hailed the process, not as an extension of, but as a release from, the dominance of industrial capitalism and its mercenary ideals.* As a result,

* Thus Froude ("Oceana," p. 7-10): "The wealth of a nation depends in the long run upon the conditions, mental and bodily, of the people of whom it consists, and the experience of all mankind declares that a race of men sound in soul and limb can be bred and reared only in the exercise of plough and spade, in the free air and sunshine, with country enjoyments and amusements, never amidst foul drains and smoke blacks, and the eternal clank of machinery. . . . Decay is busy at the heart of them (the English people), and the fate of Rome seemed to me likely to be the fate of England if she became what the political economists desired to see her. . . . The colonists might be paying us no revenue, but they were opening up the face of the earth. England could pour out among them, in return, year after year, those poor children of hers now choking in fetid alleys," etc. The fact that the vast majority of British emigrants continue to go outside the Empire—chiefly to the United States—is a sad stumbling-block to Froude's theory.

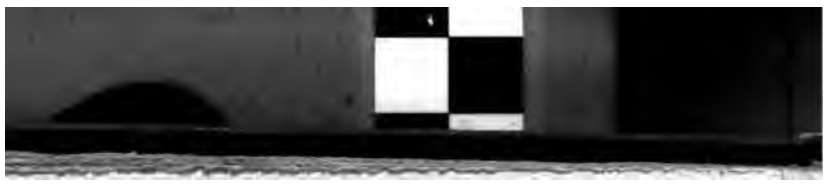
On the other hand, it is only in a strictly limited sense that he could be called an Imperialist. "An 'Empire' of Oceana," he insists, "there cannot be, the English race do not like to be parts of an Empire. But a 'commonwealth' of Oceana held together by common blood, common interest, and a common pride . . . may grow of itself if politicians can be induced to leave it alone" (pp. 10-11).



partly of actual struggle in distant and "derelict" territories, partly of fear that our rivals would introduce there the system of Protectionist monopoly, the demand has arisen that our new markets shall be embodied in our political system.

Apart from a certain empty benevolence, which sits in sackcloth and ashes over the facts of imperial expansion once a week, but is all for increasing the "white man's burden" by the same processes during the other six days—apart from the Imperialism of Mr Kipling, a romantic jumble of heathenisms gathered in camp and cantonment, forecastle and frontier cabin—the chief Imperialistic watchword of the day is the essentially false statement that "trade follows the flag." That this platform cry is incompatible with the official statistics* does not prevent its continued vogue among ignorant people. Thus men who know little of geography and nothing of economics are led to suppose that possession of the "pestilent swamps" of the Upper Nile is more important than the good-will of France, and that feather-brained schemes for running an iron-road "through the dark continent" are an effective offset to Russia's gain from the Trans-Siberian Railway. Hence the process which has added to India, the Colonies (using the word in its true sense), and our old naval stations, a series of possessions governed for the sake of their economic tribute on absolutist principles—a process that constitutes the specific feature of latter day Imperialism and the tacit abandonment of the Free Trade ideal. The agitation for an Imperial Zollverein is momentarily silenced, thanks again, not to any political virtue, but only to the fact that England must have cheap foreign food supplies. How far the development of politico-economic Protectionism will go, it is impossible to say.

*Although the size and population of the British Empire has immensely increased in the last two decades, the proportion of trade carried on with foreign countries, as compared with that carried on with our own possessions, remains stationary at three to one. Faced with this plain fact the expansionist takes refuge in hopes for the future; or he pleads that the Anglo-Saxon colonist consumes more British goods *per head* than the foreigner. As the Colonies are a very small part of the Empire, and as no new Anglo-Saxon Colonies of any importance are being made, it will be seen that this latter plea has no pertinence to the Imperialist issue. The claim that "trade" and "flag" should go together is on the face of it rank Protectionism.



If we had space for a closer examination of the facts we should see that—while the gain of low-grade markets under the "flag" (that is, subject to heavy costs for government and defence) cannot possibly be a compensation for the loss of high-grade markets which are subject to no such tax—the degradation of our industrial activities to which we have referred goes even further. That part of the Imperial process which realises Froude's desire of a return to healthy agricultural life is a very small part of the whole; that part which he condemned, and which is a mere extension of the capitalistic industrialism of these islands, is comparatively respectable, except from an ideal point of view; but the part which is most in evidence and which raises the most difficult and painful problems takes us out of the sphere of honest industry and commerce altogether. When Froude saw what the search for gold and diamonds meant, for instance in South Africa, he was so disgusted that two chapters of the book which was written to stir the Imperial spirit in the people of these islands became a fierce indictment of one of the most characteristic and notable pieces of Empire-building. One wonders, indeed, what becomes of this glorious ideal of an "Empire on which the sun never sets" if the reservations of Seeley on the subject of India and Froude's denunciations of our rule in South Africa—not to go beyond these two shining lights of the Imperial faith—be admitted. Nor did Froude know the worst. He saw, indeed, the destruction of a commonwealth of honest farmers of kindred race, religion, and history begun. He saw that our position in South Africa, initiated by military conquest, and cemented by "expensive and useless wars" against the natives and the Dutch, had been gradually extended by inexcusable aggression and still more shameful fraud. He saw the gradual triumph of a policy odious to the great majority of the white population; he foresaw a horrible race war; and in leaving the Cape for good he recorded this terrible judgment: "We have now but one hold left upon the South African Dutch, and that is their fear of the Germans. We have aggravated every evil which we most desired to prevent; we have conciliated neither person nor party. When the native chiefs turn upon us we shall have brought it to a point where white and coloured men alike of all



races and all complexions will combine to ask us to take ourselves away. This is the truth about South Africa" (pp. 60-61). He had witnessed the fraud by which we obtained possession of the Diamond Fields—a "transaction perhaps the most discreditable in English Colonial History"; but he did not live to see the culmination of these events in the Rhodesian-Johannesburg conspiracy, the scandal of the South African Committee, in which some of the highest Imperial statesmen were involved, and the final iniquity of the war of last winter. It was too much to expect that he, or any other Englishman who shared his high preoccupations, could tear down the veil of patriotic design in which these recent developments have been draped, and expose the lustful spirit that was at their heart. Factory labour and city life in this country are not beautiful things, but they are morally exquisite by comparison with the sort of society that grows about a gold or diamond-mining settlement based on native serfdom. The influence of the commercialism of the mid-century upon English politics was not purely disinterested; but it looks wholly admirable beside the influence of the "Kaffir Circus" and those kindred groups of speculative financiers whose capital is the Stock Exchange, who, from that centre, are seizing the reins of power in Parliament and the administration, while they are prostituting public opinion by means of a reptile press, and carrying on their diabolical work on the outskirts of the Empire without let or hindrance. Mr Cecil Rhodes, the type of the contemporary Empire-builder, has no connection either with those honest industries upon which England's material greatness has been built up, or with the political movements which are the expression of English freedom and have given us our place in the councils of the world. Apart from those temperamental qualities which make him a commanding figure, there is no characteristic interest of this country which he can be said to represent; and many of his chief colleagues, expatriated foreigners, make no pretence of knowing or caring for the essential elements of British civilisation. The life of a settled community offers no opportunity for such men; its public spirit imposes an intolerable restraint upon their swelling plans of economic



dominion. In the see-saw of stocks and shares they find a method of exploitation infinitely more profitable than the slow and sober routine of the manufacture, transportation, and exchange of goods. Like the *croupiers* at Monte Carlo, they preside over a vast gambling-business, in which the bank only can win in the long run. They wield the power of national and imperial officers without any corresponding responsibility. If they condescend to accept a Premiership, it is to further their own designs, in which may be included the organisation of conspiracies for the seizure of an independent state whose riches they covet. They are not, in such a case, above using Imperial forces for the purpose of establishing themselves in the place of the native rulers of the said state; but on the whole they incline to "loyalty" to the British flag, because, of all countries, Great Britain gives her pro-consuls and adventurers the freest hand and the fullest protection. Selfish in aim, unscrupulous in method, to a degree unknown and almost incredible in the metropolitan country or its colonies proper, they are supported by a growing number of the aristocrats and domestic plutocrats who would once have loathed them, but are now anxious for a share of the spoil. The "little wars' they cause but do not wage keep the passions of the mob alive in this new Rome, as the gladiatorial games did in the old; while the constant increase of armaments thus excused entails ever heavier drafts upon the British Exchequer, and so serves the additional purpose of impeding domestic reform. Not that the excuse is altogether fictitious. The very arrogance of British Imperialism tends to create the enmity against which the demand for "a navy equal to the two (or three) strongest possible antagonists" is supposed to be directed. If national security were a mere question of ratio of armaments, if it were not primarily dependent on national policy, the demand might be accepted at once as the last word of common-sense. But when we see that the ceaseless growth of armaments, which has now brought the British people to the verge of conscription, is the logical result of the ceaseless growth of Empire, and that our own leadership in the double process has become the chief excuse of the rival states that follow us in the competition, we are thrown back upon the deeper



compensation for the added burdens and dangers it brings.

We have taken the extreme case of South Africa because it shows in clearest relief how a privileged property-class, threatened at home by the growth of mass co-operation, makes new preserves in helpless low-grade countries where it can be a law unto itself—how, in fact, Empire tends to be, not an extension of the democracy and the free ethical activity in which alone we find hope for our own future, but a dumping-ground for the greedy plutocrats, the decrepit aristocracy, the parasitic official and military classes who feel their supremacy in British life gradually slipping away. The same process in one or other of its kindred forms is visible in every part of the Imperial structure except those few genuine Anglo-Saxon communities which pretty fully reflect the progressive elements of English life, and which are so exceptional as to be almost an anomaly in the mass. Examine this structure in the light of the principles of social vitality generally accepted in these islands, and you will begin to realise how very artificial an organisation it is, how lacking in that harmony of interests which, as we saw, characterised the national group. At one end, in Australia and New Zealand, you see a simple extension of our own life, varied, of course, but not destroyed, even stimulated, by change of environment. In Canada, too, there is a real continuance of nationality, though it is somewhat disturbed by the stubborn presence of the French racial element and by the economic and political influence of the United States. In Cape Colony the race question becomes much more serious, for the Africanders are more numerous than the British, and the black natives more numerous still; the economic problem is also highly aggravated. From this point downwards there is no pretence of popular government, or of any homogeneity of life between the British and native stocks. And the serious thing is that these alien peoples—"half devil and half child," as the amiable Jingo bard has it—whom we govern on absolutist principles quite alien to our own history and our better mind, so far from being mere "fringes," make up the great bulk, by population say five-sixths, of the Empire. "When the State

question whether the process of Empire-building affords any advances beyond the limits of the nationality," says Seeley, "its power becomes precarious and artificial. This is the condition of most Empires; it is the condition, for example, of our own Empire in India." Again: "The Colonies and India are in opposite extremes. Whatever political maxims are most applicable to the one are most inapplicable to the other. . . . How can the same nation pursue two lines of policy so radically different without bewilderment?" We know that Seeley was as hopeless of India as he was hopeful of the self-governing Anglo-Saxon Colonies. "Two races could scarcely be more alien from each other than the English and the Hindus. . . . England is separated from India by one of the strongest barriers that nature could set up"—the impossibility of colonisation. "There is no natural tie whatever between the two countries, no community of blood, no community of religion . . . and no community of interest, except so much as there may be between all countries — namely, the interest that each has to receive the commodities of the other." Nobody abused Seeley as a "pessimist" or a "Little Englander" for stating these plain truths. Having taken as his standard and test of Empire the idea of an organic "expansion of England," he could not but state them. Regarding "all our ideas of patriotism and public virtue" as depending on the "assumption of a homogeneous community," he could not pretend to see the highest realisation of those ideas in an "artificial and precarious" political union of which heterogeneity is the chief characteristic. If he had lived to witness the orgies of the Diamond Jubilee, and the prostitution of the party of Gladstone, Cobden, and Bright to resonant talk about a "moral" and "sane" Imperialism, he would have been the first to say that morality and sanity in politics consist, in the first place, not in the excitation of empty personal emotion, however generous its intent may be, but in the facing of plain facts and the acknowledgment of plain distinctions. We claim to be profiting by his lessons and carrying them a step further when we point out that—so far from being a process of genuine national extension, as in the Anglo-Saxon colonies—Empire in Asia and Africa has been little more than an extension of class



power, class privilege, and class property, the typical forms of which are the bureaucracy and militarism of India and Egypt, and the plutocracy of South and West Africa.

That is the qualitative analysis; a quantitative analysis would disclose the still more alarming fact that, except where the Flag waves over lands devastated by war, famine, or imported disease, Empire means an accelerated increase of the protected low-grade population, while the rate of increase of the home population declines year by year. Only about 3 per cent. of the population of the Empire outside the British Islands is considered capable of self-government, and the disproportion becomes ever greater, both through natural increase, and through the megalomaniacal enterprises which have extended our territory, in ten years, from eight to eleven or twelve million square miles, and its population from 300 to 430 millions. Whether we regard this fact from the point of view of political power, or of economic activity, or of moral responsibility, we are forced to the conclusion that—even if the fundamental fallacy were admissible that there is any one existing form of civilisation applicable to all countries in favour of which all other forms must be eliminated —no form of civilisation, though it were as strong as the Roman and as subtle as the Greek, could maintain its structural and functional integrity in the face of such odds. Ours does not maintain its integrity; it is visibly degenerating, at the centre even more rapidly than at the extremities. If we had made it our business from the beginning to preserve every promising social tie, especially economic and political organisations, that existed among these hundreds of millions of helpless subjects, the whole prospect would be different. But, as the Industrial Revolution broke up the old settled life of England, so, in a more aggravated degree and on a vastly larger scale, the Imperial process has broken the old *morale* of life in British Africa and British Asia, and has created a vast landless proletariat, without rights, without property, without ideal higher than that of obedience, without hope except in the mercy of the British "boss."

This is no idle pessimism. We speak for the few Englishmen who have grasped the real meaning of Empire, its

history, its physiology, its psychology. The more the British elector realises that he, every one of him, is morally responsible for the well-being of seventy British subjects, the more will the now prevalent pride of power and greed of pelf be lost in the spirit of sober courage which our character affords in the most desperate emergencies. As he begins to see why domestic reforms are postponed, why the power of money and "Society" grows, why bureaucracy waxes more and more, why foreign policy is controlled by the fighting services and other interested persons, why we are discredited in Europe and even in America; when he sees, in brief, that Caesarism and Plutocracy abroad mean Caesarism and Plutocracy at home, there will come upon him the strong impulse necessary for a new advance toward ethical democracy.

VII

The newer Internationalism, then, will be neither a culture without a political and economic base, nor an economic policy lacking support in culture and political ethics. From the fate of empires in the past, it draws the lesson of how much better than pride in a material accomplishment is the conception of a moral task and ideal in which all men of good-will, of whatever condition, in whatever clime, may have their part. From the success of true organic unions, especially from the fact of national peace and progress, it points forward to yet larger fulfilments of the same principles of integration and co-operation. It is, above all, democratic—that is to say, it is based on the belief that the highest type of society is the one all whose sane adult members share freely in all its sane activities—power, pleasure, labour, learning. Its chief aim, therefore, is to bring the democratic sentiment of every progressive country into contact with that of every other, and so gradually to arouse an international democratic movement before which the institutions that are maintained by and for the propagation of national hatred will melt away like snow before spring sunshine. Recognising the ultimate community of interest among the labouring masses all over the earth, we may now take the Hague



Conference and the Peace Convention signed thereat as the first decisive steps toward a human confederation which will be the formal expression of that common interest. Nor is it by the destruction of the spirit of nationality that this World-State will be built up, but, on the contrary, by its fulfilment. The worst foes of true patriotism are those predatory classes, plutocratic, militarist, aristocratic, which use the word to mask their own cosmopolitan greed and violence. The nation will find its lost soul in a process of international democratic expansion, as the parish council has found itself again in course of the latest extensions of British local government, as the individual realises himself in the friendly give-and-take of settled social life. The essential laws of vital growth apply both to the individual and the social organism. An outside stimulus may aid it, but all sound development must come from within. And each country, however small, has some contribution to make to the human commonwealth. Once out of this era of the dominance of money and big battalions, indeed, the old criterions of "greatness" will appear incredibly monstrous. England may, in the meantime, go the way of Carthage, Rome, and Spain; or, becoming wise at the eleventh hour, she may learn a greater greatness than that of daubing the map all over with blotches of crude red. The future is a hidden scroll; but, come what may, while man endures, there is one appeal that can never lose its force, one cry to which the ear can never be quite deaf. The magic word of words is—Brotherhood.

THE PEOPLE IN POWER

J. R. MacDonald

THE faith that the voice of the people is the voice of God is now about thirty years out of date. Those who held it assumed that an enfranchised democracy would be wide awake to every political issue, would take a constant and continual interest in matters of government, would form opinions which, by reason of the mass holding them, would be the best for the nation, would steadily uphold human as apart from caste ideals, and would speak and move in such a way that their wishes, whatever their quality, would be easily known and could give rise to no ambiguity in their statement. From such a simple conception of the operation of manhood suffrage in affairs of government, it was the most natural thing in the world to rise to the faith that the people's voice would be God's voice, and that the rule of the majority would be the reign of practical righteousness. The flaw, which has doomed this prophecy to remain a dream, has been, that the democratic machine has not run so smoothly or so strenuously as was anticipated. The experience of thirty years goes to show that the democracy took infinitely more interest in getting the vote than they have taken in using it, that parties have largely abandoned political principles for which they won majorities by hard work and educational propaganda, and have drifted more and more into the hands and state of mind of the skilled electioneering agent whose business is not to build and maintain the fabric of a party, but to win elections, that democratic opinion is neither clear nor determined, and that manhood suffrage does not guard the country against some of the most degrading forms of class ascendency. It is a mistake to blame democracy for any of these shortcomings, or to imagine that had the suffrage never been



extended, public interest in politics would have been keener and the state of parties would have been healthier. All that can be maintained is, that democracy up to date has fulfilled few of the more generous anticipations of its idealist pioneers, and that it has not saved us from a long period of political apathy during which the worst features of party government, of an aristocracy dabbling in public affairs, of a careless electorate, have begun to show themselves.

It is easy to look back over the past quarter of a century and compile a catalogue of Acts of Parliament which show that democratic government has some reality, and that, in the end, whoever is now to be a political leader must bow to the popular will. And yet, nothing is clearer than that the twin foundation stones of democracy — independence and equality — have been considerably undermined within recent years. Class government is being restored. It may be that form of class government which is guided by the claim that it has been divinely endowed to do kindness to those under it, that it is a rule established for the benefit of the ruled whether they be the poor in our industrial centres or the uncivilised in Central Africa — a class government which consequently has a semblance of democratic support as its basis; but the fact remains that apart from its deeds, its spirit is alien to every principle and aspiration of democracy, and its influence tends to destroy the democratic virtues of self-respect and self-reliance. The defence for democracy which is far and away the weightiest is, that progress must spring not from the generosity or the enlightenment of a class but from the common intelligence. No class, however enlightened or selected, can interpret the life of a nation unless in the nation itself its life is pulsing vigorously through every vein; and, consequently, no catalogue of Acts of Parliament, no strengthening of the scaffolding of national life, can compensate for a lowering of the keenness of a people in their own affairs and a cessation on their part to take upon themselves their full responsibility to work out their national ideals and destiny. Despite the work done by Parliament, political interest has not been at a much lower state this century than it is now. The institutions and opportunities for discussing political issues



which were common throughout the country a few years ago hardly exist to-day. The workman's political club in the vast majority of cases is nothing but a convenient public-house.* The democratic press finds that the less it says about politics the better. A description of a first-class cricket or football match would get a thousand readers for every ten which a French Revolution would get if it were unattended by horrors and fireworks. This generation hardly understands what the last meant by "political liberties."

And yet, to speak of democracy as being a failure is to use language which is as unintelligible as though we spoke of growth from youth to age as being a mistake. The political power—real or formal—of the people must increase rather than decrease. It is not only a necessity, but is to be welcomed as such. There can be no great moral advancement unless it be initiated amongst an intelligent people living in a land where popular liberty is valued.

What explanations consistent with the rightness of democracy and with progress under its government can be offered for democratic results in this country so far? Why has a democracy proved itself amenable to most of the evil influences of an aristocracy? Why have bribery and cajolery—in forms eluding the Corrupt Practices Act—revived as determining factors in elections? Why are votes cast less and less on political issues and more and more on such foreign considerations as whether a candidate subscribes to chapel funds, is a large local employer and promises to bring trade to the town, or is a liberal friend of sport? Why have the democratic electors turned out to be as docile under a manager as any corrupt body of "pot-walloppers" ever were under a patron? We may very well leave to the petty election agent an enthusiasm for "one man one vote" and similar cries. They are not without their significance, especially to the man who places value upon an election won, irrespective of why and how it is won; but it is of infinitely more importance for social and political well-being to understand why the demo-

* The reports of the Government inquiry into drink in clubs are much more significant as contributions to the working of democracy than as revelations of the personal habits of the people.



cratic material, whether it votes once or a dozen times, whether it is grouped in under-represented or in over-represented constituencies, whether it is harassed by three candidates or left in peace with two, has not justified the high opinions which the pioneering Radicals formed of it. For the difficulty is not that there is a lack of democratic influence, or that it is gerrymandered, but that what there is of it is not so good as was expected.

Let us first of all be careful of our standards. The elections between 1870 and 1885 were fought by men still flushed by new power, and still breathless with political agitation which drew vitality from inspiring ideals of democratic worth and liberty. Political opinion was at high tide; the democratic mind was not working under a normal state of tension; the political atmosphere was unnaturally clear and objects stood out in it unnaturally well defined. The political interest shown by these elections was therefore much higher than an average, and to take them as normal standards would be a mistake. The new electors had to be undeceived on many points, had to be taught the resistance of a settled society to change, had to experience the difficulty of fighting without excitement. The tension had to be loosened before the normal force of democratic advance, and the normal efficiency of democratic concentration, could be reached.

But when this has been allowed for, the shortcomings of democracy have not been fully explained.* There have been influences at work subverting the democratic instincts, and they raise some of the most pressing questions in the ethical conditions of success in popular government.

The first place amongst subverting influences must be given to certain results of Britain's industrial prosperity. The early Radicals dealt with a generation hardly removed from the days of family industry. The great gulf between capital and labour had not been fixed, and neither masters nor men fully appreciated the significance of the social revolution in which they were playing parts and which was driving them asunder.

* It should be noted that the references to democracy are exclusively to British democracy, and that the word itself is used to mean the political rule of a majority of the third estate.



Economic problems as such had hardly assumed social importance in the eyes of politicians outside that small body of agitators who are always ahead of their generation. For, although the large town had grown and wages problems had already given rise to much trouble, the industrial state of the country at the time was regarded as being in flux and flow, and it was supposed that if left alone it would settle itself on lines of rough justice* in good time. But it has refused to settle itself. The resistance which our inherited aristocratic prejudices, methods of activity and institutions, have offered to the growth of a simple plutocracy has saved our own country from the extreme forms of rule by the monied classes from which the republic of the United States has suffered so much. But plutocracy has been heavy upon us nevertheless. In America the money power has followed its own natural bent. No tradition toned its arrogance. Here it was guided by an aristocracy, and its tendency and ideal were aristocratic.

In so far as plutocracy has influenced our politics it has been mainly through the effect of its business methods, its wealth, its materialist ethics, upon social tone and sentiment. It has not brought in its train corruption of the kind which has made the political life of the United States a byeword of reproach; it has imitated our old aristocracy in its claims for social distinction, its *rôle* of benevolent superior, its function to protect the decencies of social caste, its privilege to indulge in wanton luxury. The only difference between the old and the new aristocracy is that the old based its fabric on birth, whilst the new bases its on money. No one who now studies the economics and politics of the mercantile Radicals of the earlier years of the reform movement can miss being impressed by their complete failure to realise that the industrial movement, of the existence of which they were so fully aware, and upon the success of which they built so many hopes of international harmony and domestic prosperity, would in its second generation yield a crop of rejuvenated aristocratic ideals, and narrow into a commonplace round of profit-making and philanthropy. They wrote when the leaders of industry were yet workingmen, and when there had been no time to allow of the growth

* *Cf.* "The Distribution of Income," by Prof. Smart.



of industrial class divisions, and their assumption that between labour and capital there would always exist a personal intimacy and social and political co-operation, is the key to their social hopes and political faith. What has actually happened is, that industrial greatness has established a new aristocracy as exclusive in its pride as any aristocracy of birth has ever been, and as anxious for outward show of distinction and honour. The sense of democratic equality between the manufacturer as social outcast and his workmen as outcast in general, has disappeared, and because the boundaries of an aristocracy of wealth are much less rigidly fixed than those of an aristocracy of birth, as is witnessed by the selection of those whom the Queen desires to honour in January and May each year, there is not the same resentment shown by the people at large to the claims of this new aristocracy as to those of the old.* The idea of democratic equality instead of being fostered by industry has been weakened. The democratic spirit receives no nourishment from an aristocracy which is aggressive only in its vulgarity.

Moreover, industrial prosperity and the existence of a separate monied class have created a thousand and one new democratic needs, from the providing of football entertainments to an expensive Nonconformist place of worship. It is here that the money power has been most disastrous to democratic ideals, because it is here that it has been so successful in pushing political interests into the background. It is at this point that the door to Parliament has been opened to the man whose sole qualification is his purse, whose political interests are slight, and whose political ideas are commonplace and borrowed; and it is also at this point that the impartial enquirer into the tone and prospects of English democracy has to turn aside for a moment and question seriously whether some of our religious denominations must not in justice be placed amongst the most pernicious political influences of the time. At any rate, whoever has been privileged to keep, or look into, the private accounts of members of Parliament,

* Mill's remark that there were many people calling themselves Radicals, because they could not get into the House of Lords, will be remembered in this connection.



knows how truly it can be said of religion that in many places it is living upon its political allegiance.

The real blame, however, hardly rests with those who live and enjoy themselves by subscription. It lies with the growth of the money power immorally held and used for illegitimate purposes. The complex network of causes and objects, which beset the path of the honest politician and which trip him up unless his hand is ever finding its way to his pocket, has been woven by the action and reaction of the reckless distribution of money. A subscription once given binds not only the giver but the recipient. Without doubt, the dependence of the public for recreation, entertainment, religion and ideals upon the monied classes is not only making democratic progress difficult by lowering the tone of democratic opinion and the character of democratic ideals, but is diverting the popular attention from social and political affairs. We cannot hear of the benevolence of the rich man without profoundly regretting its necessity. In its ultimate results it is doubtful if any doctrine is more pernicious than that which says that it is the duty of the millionaire to spend his money during his lifetime for public purposes. Public self-help needs protecting quite as much as personal self-help, and the independence of the community requires to be as zealously safeguarded as the independence of the individual.

The grand result of this growth of the money power is to check the stream of progressive change by increasing the indebtedness of the community to the monied classes. In no direction is this assuming a more alarming aspect than in the press. The virtue of a "cheap press" is only partly realised when the newspaper is sold at a popular price; it is fully experienced when every respectable body of opinion can start its organ and publish its criticisms. But for years the tendency has been to make it almost impossible to start any newspaper unless a man of great wealth or of ample credit is promoter, because the press has been gradually passing out of the control of the reader and has been becoming the organ of the advertiser and the convenience of the capitalist. The newspaper, so characteristic of the democratic movements on the Continent, and not unknown in this country, which depends



altogether upon its opinions for its circulation, is being crushed out of existence; and when recognised newspaper exponents of certain schools of thought change their policy, it is practically impossible to publish anything in their place. The effect of this upon public opinion is very marked already, and the inevitable result will be that the Fourth Estate will be as protected from popular influence, as unanimous in its decisions, as impotent in spreading sound and enlightened opinion as the House of Lords itself.

These disappointing results, it must be pointed out, repeating the warning which John Stuart Mill gave to readers of de Toqueville's "Democracy in America," are "the effects of civilisation,"* and must not be confounded with the effects of democracy. Their results upon the working of democratic government condemn the social conditions from which they spring much more than they condemn the political rule of the common people. But they must be mentioned here because experience shows that democracy, conceived merely as a mass government, has no power to protect itself against the subverting influence "of the effects naturally arising from the mere progress of national prosperity, in the form in which that progress manifests itself in modern times."

If the monied interests have undermined some of the democratic virtues, it must be said, on the other hand, that those virtues have not always been so robust as they were imagined to be. That some people, as Halifax wrote, love the ringing of bells and the glitter of tinsel, and take their politics from that love, must be allowed for in any forecast of democratic achievements that is likely to come true. Moreover, it is difficult for the masses to take a continuous interest in the development of politics, especially when that development slows down in its pace and becomes sober and calm and commonplace in its events; it is difficult to appeal to the popular ideal of right unless that ideal is violated by some flagrant piece of political tyranny or social iniquity. The ideal is always a possible factor in a situation, but it is generally latent, a modifying influence rather than an active guide. The divine intuition and fire of democracy, like the Golden

* "Dissertations and Discussions," vol. ii. p. 62.



Age, is a dream of a past philosophy—of a false philosophy as well. Popular inspiration is something more commonplace, something more responsive to the flaws of human nature and the evils of human conditions.

We may regard the present gambling mania as transient in its form and passion, we may look upon the present outburst of shallow Imperialism as a passing delusion of national instincts good in themselves, we may believe that the character of the cheap democratic press will improve, but even if such optimism is justifiable, we cannot live any longer in the delusion that the instincts of the average man can be trusted to keep up within him political enthusiasm, and indicate to him the most desirable line of political advance. Our experience of thirty years of democracy in power has been to emphasise the necessity of democratic character.

So long as *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, was believed to be an aspect of cosmic truth, the stress of reforming effort was laid upon getting the *Populus* as big and as powerful as possible, and upon this the Radical doctrine followed, that a democratic franchise meant an intelligent and a progressive state. The doctrine did not rest at the just and proper claim that such a franchise was a necessary condition of such a state, but it related the one and the other in bonds of cause and effect. The error survives to this day amongst the many suggestions made from time to time as to our methods of government. The mechanical reformer is not yet at rest, and his newest discovery is that the representative system has been a failure, and that we must have direct democracy. This is no place to discuss either the representative system and its alleged failures, or direct democracy and its alleged successes; but it is impossible to see from our own experience how the substitution of the latter for the former will have any revolutionary and practical results. For, if the masses were so vigilant, so disgusted with representative authority, so clear-sighted regarding political aims, so interested in the making of the statute-book, as the friends of direct democracy assume, it is difficult to believe that those qualities could be entirely set aside at election times and that public opinion, when it has



the opportunity, should show so few indications of that self-possession and independence of thought which we are asked to believe it would show if it voted on the details and not on the principles of legislation.

When we turn from a consideration of the influences besetting democracy to an examination of its practical ideas, we discover another reason for confusion and hesitation. The advent of democracy as a power, curiously enough, involves an almost complete clearing away of those very proposals which enticed it to clamour for power. We are in a transition period. The watchwords of past democratic victories sound hollow in our ears to-day and rouse no passion and no enthusiasm. We look back to our political interests of a quarter of a century ago in amazement, and can hardly understand how it was that the causes we espoused assumed so great an importance in our minds. The fact is that we were still under the impetus of the great reform agitations, and our enthusiasm was at the disposal of anyone who appealed to our desire for the establishment of democratic equality in the political state. Thus, whether it was the Burials Bill, a disestablishment motion, or a proposal for ending the House of Hanover, we saw in it something precious to democratic equality and gave it our hearty support. But the democracy in power found a voice of its own, and the addresses made to it turned its attention away from constitutional to social grievances. A new set of questions were hastening to the front to confuse, at the beginning at any rate, progressive parties and progressive ideas. We were on the threshold of democracy in power. The time had gone by when questions of inequality in political status were to be the chief contention between parties. Not only were the remnants of the old order doing unconsciously what Sir Robert Peel did consciously after the first Reform Bill—ceasing to fight with the new conditions and beginning to adapt them to their ends (*e.g.* the Church began to show democratic sympathies), but the democracy itself showed signs of turning its attention to what it could do with the powers it already had. The principles raised by a discussion of what democratic power is, are totally different from those raised by



a consideration of democratic rights, and so it was that under the names of the New Radicalism, collectivism, socialism, principles were preached and programmes published which were not only unfamiliar but alien to the older Liberal party.

The work of democratic agitation is no longer to concern itself mainly with tinkering with the constitution and enfranchising the disfranchised; it is to modify the fabric of society, to make the art of government the greatest of arts. Ethics has made a profound change in the intelligent purpose of this pursuit. For whereas the cruder Utopian beginnings of socialism paid but scanty attention to the individual, socialism is now being developed into a policy of individualism—only, of an individualism as different as day from night from the absurdity which the Liberty and Property Defence League holds up as ideal freedom. The influence of ethics upon democratic ideals of co-operation has been to give the individual — the individual endowed with all his faculties—a central place in the collectivist scheme, to place it beyond doubt that the co-operative commonwealth is to be a commonwealth not of incomplete functions and organs, but of free wills and individuals.

But every thoughtful person feels that to touch social questions, radically, is to meddle with something of the most sensitive delicacy, to handle something of an organic complexity, to work with a material yielding results which an ample experience shows are rarely forecast with accuracy owing to the utter impossibility of saying what unforeseen elements are finally to modify the play of circumstances that can be foreseen. In addition, the rather mechanical operations of political power, and the rigid routine of legal method, appear at first sight to be very little fitted to get from social material anything like the best results possible. General political enthusiasm is impossible under such circumstances.

Our chief hope of the democracy must be the spread of well-defined democratic social and political ideas, and the speedy termination of the period of transition in which we now are like shipwrecked sailors stranded with our ship, everything wrecked saving an unseaworthy boat or two. Is it the fate of democracy to be enfranchised only to be



wrecked? Is it its desire to use its political power with the direct purpose of solving some of the great social problems which are ever meeting humanity in its onward march, but is it debarred by the nature of things from fulfilling its desire? Or are the enfranchised masses likely to revolutionise the structure of society so that the twentieth century will be as far advanced beyond the nineteenth in its democratic authority, as the nineteenth is advanced beyond the eighteenth in its political liberty?

Whatever may be the limits placed upon it by its own nature and the nature of its circumstances, it is not in the nature of democracy to distrust itself, and whether with hesitation or boldness, with knowledge or stupidity, the democracy will form new programmes and seek a fuller measure of liberty.

But for the future the purely liberal view of democracy must be modified. The view of democracy as the government of equally enlightened and capable citizens, the view which never suspected that the principle of differentiation of function applies in politics, has become untenable. The old formal conception of the term liberty will also be abandoned as being antiquated and of no present guidance. A conception of social liberty—organic individualism—must take the place of the conception of political liberty—atomic individualism—which has been the guiding thought of progress this century. Democracy in power will do something (whether in the main by the municipality or by parliament, we need not stop to consider) to reconstruct the industrial state and remodel industrial methods. In other words, it must make an attempt to find practically how the private individual can best, so to speak, *co-operate with himself as a citizen*, to secure for himself and the greatest number of his fellows, the largest amount and the best quality of individual freedom. Both modifications lay an added emphasis upon the part which ethical influences must play in state affairs.

It has been said that a great deal of the everyday propaganda of socialism is an appeal to an emotional sense of right and wrong in economics, and the significantly large proportion of converts drawn from men and women taking an active part in the church and chapel work of the country, and of those



attracted years ago by the independence of thought and seriousness of living taught by the National Secular Society, supports the charge. But when closely examined, this is no objection at all. It is really a discovery of the fact that the chief motive for democratic advance in the future will be an ethical intelligence of an ever-sharpening keenness and ever-widening horizon. A failure to discover that it is the needs of the human being as intelligence which democracy in power must satisfy, leads not only to a failure to understand the aims of the younger democrats, but to a waste of time in making such futile objections to their purposes as that the working-classes of to-day wear better coats and live in better houses than their grandfathers, and that the income of everybody can command pound for pound from half as much again to twice as much as it did half-a-century ago. The two standard demands of an industrial democracy, a living wage and a maximum of leisure, are primarily ethical demands, and can no more be satisfied by reflections that no one thought of them a generation ago, and that the condition of the working-classes is improving, than the opponent of vivisection could be silenced if an attempt were made to allay his disturbed sensibilities by proofs that in bygone times we tortured not only animals, but our own kith and kin. These demands may be defended on economic grounds, and they may be shown to be desirable, because they are convenient, but they must, as a last resort—and as a most effective resort—trust for support to the ethical standards of public opinion, by virtue of which an eight hours' day, a living wage, and the like have become rational needs. It is becoming more and more impossible to understand the aims of the young, agitating, and vital part of democracy, except in relation to ethics.

There is a temptation to everyone holding strongly by certain opinions, which have not yet become commonplace by reason of general acceptance, to regard those opinions as the beginning of a new era in progress. If the new Radical, the Collectivist, the Socialist, claims that distinction for his creed, it must be remembered that he has in his favour the fact that he became a factor in politics just at the moment when democracy came into power, that his demands all relate to matters



of human liberty of a real rather than of a formal kind, and that ever since he began to agitate, progressive programmes have more or less reflected his influence, and that, before 1870, the evolution of national life had not reached the point where his ideas and proposals could be of practical use. That questions relating to leisure and conditions of employment should be made the chief features of political ideas, marks the introduction of a new element into politics.

It must be pointed out that the labour legislation now being asked for is very much more than a sequel to that passed under the influence of Lord Shaftesbury. This differs from that as the workings of the moral conscience differ from the motives of the first brute-man (if he ever existed) who shaped his conduct under a contract of mutual defence with a friendly neighbour. To use the arm of the law to abolish crying evils, to put an end to an ever-present injustice, is one thing; to use that arm to promote justice actively, and to keep open the road of moral advancement, to bring down from their throne in the ideal into a place in the world certain conceptions of distributive justice, is quite another thing. And yet this latter is what is now being attempted, and was certain to be attempted, as soon as democracy came into power. When society is enfranchised, the social question becomes the political question. Despite their many failures, the people in power have brought us to that stage in democratic evolution, and at this point we must take up our position both in surveying the past and forecasting the future.

We must abandon all hopes of perfecting democratic machinery to such a degree that it will produce ethical results. That is an ideal difficult to cast away as worthless, but worthless it is nevertheless. Democracy can be made efficient only by the education of the individual citizen in civic virtues. The method of that education is one of the great problems in democracy. America has boldly faced it as regards her special need of making from all peoples of the earth patriotic American citizens. Whether she can succeed completely is a futile matter for discussion; that she has succeeded in her main object is undoubted. She has, chiefly by a carefully planned educational method, made



the poorest and meanest emigrant from the poorest and meanest parts of Europe feel that in becoming her citizen he has entered upon a great and inspiring historical heritage. That her patriotic teaching has sometimes gone to embarrassing lengths, that it has tended to overstep itself and develop patriotic vices, will perhaps lead to corrections in the future; but when these drawbacks have been amply allowed for, the fact remains that the American nation as a political unit has been consolidated chiefly by education.

Our task is more difficult than that of the United States, and yet it is not impossible. The classes on citizenship, of which so much has been heard, have been praised rather because the subject is novel and interesting than because they can serve the purpose which people expect of them. They have been in the main lectures upon the scaffolding of citizenship. They have shown some considerable historical reading and some little ingenuity in discovering explanations for events; but on the side of civic virtue, of inculcating that pride in our civic attainments up to now which is the sure guarantee that those attainments will not be frittered away in the future, of disseminating the civic spirit, they have been wanting. The psychological effect which it has been the grand purpose of American patriotic educators to produce, has apparently rarely been present to those who have hitherto been responsible for teaching citizenship in this country. The aim of citizen lectures intended to improve the quality of citizenship should be to familiarise people with the attitude of the best social thought, to make it a mental condition with them to assume the duties which a community places upon the individual, to make an anarchism of conduct an unthinkable course of action for them, to make them take for granted their inter-dependence one upon another, to emphasise the sacredness of personal and public liberty and the iniquity of every approach made to undermine it, to raise politics from being a mere affair of voting for a man for any reason that it may suit parties to offer, and show it to be the workings of man's most sacred aspirations through the medium of the communal life of which he is a part. The scientific accuracy of "beginning



with the policeman and ending with the sovereign" is admirable if a good citizen is one who can tell you the London parish in which he lives, the names of the crowned heads of Europe, and the exact meaning of the latest interpretation of an obscure clause in the Vaccination Act—if, in short, good citizenship depends on knowledge of the anatomical structure of the city; if, however, it depends upon the character of the citizen as such, scientific accuracy must be supplemented by some appreciation of the duty of the learned prodigy to the fabric of which his knowledge is so great. The scientific method must be supplemented by the ethical method, and an explanation of the derivation of "Peeler" and of his function in society must be the warp of a fabric, the woof of which is a more highly coloured and finely wrought presentation of examples in the qualities of good citizenship. Good citizenship must, in short, be cultivated by an education in social ethics rather than by a course in political history. This education cannot be given to the full in the public school or the evening class; but as it is treated in detail elsewhere in this volume, I need not refer further to it in this place.

But the democratic optimist will find his most unassailable standing ground on the nature of the democratic ideal which is slowly emerging from uninspiring circumstance and confusion of party. If we find that the democracy is discovering for itself a line of further political advance, a principle of further progressive action, a human ideal towards which to bend its energies, the evil conditions into which it may have fallen cannot be permanent. The inward idea will triumph over outward misguiding enticements. Are there any indications that the democracy is discovering a new source of moral and intellectual vigour which will be available for political purposes?

During the brief reign of democracy we have noticed the rise of new conceptions of state activity which have been disturbing to old ideas of individual liberty and to old notions regarding the way in which the moral law can be enforced. So powerful have these new conceptions become that the democratic ideal is no longer the rule of the whole people, but the wise use of political power to regulate and control conditions of life



which used to be regarded as beyond political concern. The coming struggle in democratic politics is not to be for "rights" but for authority, and it is to be raised mainly because after the enfranchisement of the masses social ideals enter into political programmes, and they enter, not as something which at best can be indirectly promoted by government, but as something which it is the chief business of governments to advance directly.

In a sense, a large human ideal as the spirit of political activity is not new, as no great political movement has ever been without it; but the form of the ideal changes, and we have to ascertain whether modern political life shows in its activities the inspiration of an underlying spirit which "dreams dreams and sees visions." The political optimist has not far to seek for his assuring facts. On all sides there is evidence that the co-operative idea touched with human emotion is raising in the horizon of the vision of even the average man the fair outline of the co-operative commonwealth, the liberty of which will not be individualistic but social, not atomic but organic. From the three historical watchwords of democratic political progress, fraternity is stepping out to give a lead, and under her sway, religion, ethics, politics, economics are already bowing.

> "The new age stands as yet
> Half built against the sky"—

even as an ideal; but it is rapidly gathering stability, it is rapidly becoming the same vision to bodies of people. At the moment it commands an ignorant and opportunist allegiance as well as a sincere one, but by-and-by its half-hearted seekers will fall away, politics will once more be earnest, and principle and conviction be supreme.

Meanwhile, we are expected to notice an *a priori* objection to the inevitable attempt which democracy in power will make to apply political methods to the solution of ethical problems. The custom on one side of the controversy is to argue: "The nature of ethical questions is such, and the nature of the political power is something else. These two cannot co-operate." The fact is that the little we know of how the two work together indicates that those objectors misunderstand either the nature of ethics or the nature of politics, probably the latter. It is generally the case with an ethical



problem which concerns the relation between one man and another in his social capacity, or between one man and another not on exact equality, that neither the one nor the other is in a good position from which to see, or adopt if he does see, what his conduct should be. In a family quarrel it is rare for either man or woman to be regulated in their conduct by the social obligations of their contract; the employee whose economic position has forbidden him all his life to make a free contract, rarely urges his demands with an eye upon social well-being, and his employer rarely moves for good or evil without giving a first consideration to profits. If it were true that public opinion on such matters ranged itself on one side or the other in accordance with what aristocratic and ultra-socialist critics call its "interests," class or otherwise, a resort to political methods would not carry the least guarantee that a social view was being impressed upon both the parties to the dispute. It would simply mean that the person who belonged to the "interest" of more votes than the other would find his opinion sanctioned politically. But that is not an explanation of majorities, of the formation and expression of public opinion. The public have to be convinced by either side not upon personal grounds, because to the majority the personal interest is remote, but upon grounds of social justice, or by a presentation of right and wrong in a wider application than an unhappy husband or a harassed employer can see. Hence it is that popular opinion is so rarely massed on one side unless the rights of a dispute are overwhelmingly with one of the parties; hence it is that those on whose lips a class appeal is always at hand find so little response when a test of their influence is taken; hence also it is that the term "public opinion" is constantly misused both by the detractors of democracy and those of its supporters whose phraseology is most extreme. In an appeal to the public sense of right, even when it is made under the most favourable circumstances, there is a proportion of class and sectional votes cast. But these may be taken to discount each other, for they are never confined to one side of the question. The mass who generally decides the issues is either very indirectly interested in them, except as citizens,



or has associated them with a conception of social ethics. Popular decisions have been found in practice to be tolerably wise—although first decisions have sometimes to be revised. But no authority can revise its own decisions with better grace or with less danger to social stability and political continuity than a democracy. That a mass of people cannot rise to a higher ethical decision than the average of the heights to which the separate individuals can rise is a conclusion based upon a hasty survey of what actually happens when a community has an appeal addressed to it. When the subject of the appeal is of no importance, the answer may be anything and may be determined by unworthy motives or by no special motive at all. But when the appeal raises questions of some magnitude, with possibly far-reaching effects on the social and political fabric, the public regard it objectively, their first attitude is conservative, the progress of opinion depends almost exclusively upon the soundness of the position of the conflicting parties. On any given question it might be easy to find a small class with a somewhat higher ideal than the public, but on no series of questions could that class be depended upon to give decisions of the same ethical and practical value as the general body of the people. There are "new characteristics," to use M. Le Bon's words, formed when the individual becomes part of a crowd; and, as this writer further points out, the characteristics which are thus formed belong to the sentiments and instincts—"religion, politics, morality, the affections and antipathies, etc."—which on ethical matters are likely to give a true note.

To say that on general principles ethics is a matter for the individual alone is absurd, and springs from a view of the state as a menace to individual liberty which has become untenable with the destruction of the theory of individual rights under the social contract. The state as a policeman or as an awkward limitation upon individual liberty which has to be tolerated by the individual forced by nature to live in a community, is not the idea we have to deal with at all. The state in free democratic countries has gone beyond that. It has begun to assume consciously the characteristics of the



definition given to it by Aristotle as existing for the purpose of promoting good life. The distinction between it and the voluntary society which is supposed to deal legitimately with ethical ends, is becoming less and less evident as we are becoming more familiar with the fact that there is as much of the "voluntary" nature in a free democratic state as in any society which has a policy given to it by a majority of its members, and which claims to have an opinion and adopt a course of action of its own. In the state there is, indeed, a much more real protection against the autocratic methods of officials than there is in so-called voluntary societies, and whatever step is decided upon nationally is much more likely to be the result of a wider and more complete acquiescence on the part of individuals than is the case in resolutions sanctioned by apparently more voluntary forms of organisation, such as a trade union, a co-operative society, or a political caucus. All that the democracy, then, has to decide when considering the advisability of making certain ethical needs the motive of a political agitation is not whether, theoretically, the state should actively promote good life, but whether the special needs with which they are concerned are of such a nature as the law can vindicate and satisfy. It is not a question of whether the state *ought* to do it, but whether the state *can* do it. All remote discussions on principle must be pushed aside, and the consideration limited to whether a law will reach the ends aimed at, whether it can be enforced with tolerable certainty, and whether it is necessary to employ political machinery, or whether less ponderous methods will do.*

In their higher applications, moral convictions no doubt refuse to be expressed in the formal and mechanical operations of an Act of Parliament. But there are certain unmistakable conditions of the ethical life as formal and mechanical as an Act of Parliament can be. Leisure is one of them; education is another; a tolerable security in the means of existence is a third. They can, to a very great extent, be obtained by political means, because their conditions do not vary very

* *Cf.* "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," by Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, p. 54, etc.



much with time and place, and what variations there are —*e.g.* in working an eight hours' day—can be foreseen and provided for. The union of interests between capital and labour, the elimination from the lives of the workmen of the worries that uncertainty of employment gives rise to, the crushing out of inferior methods of production, and the encouragement of superior ones, are problems which democracy in power will turn its attention to, and draw from them that strength of conviction and coherence of purpose which will enable political interests to free themselves from seduction—whether the seduction of the monied classes bent upon buying votes, or of the imperialists bent upon subverting opinion.

Thus it is that we drift further and further away from the mechanical conception of democracy and abandon more and more completely the idea that the self-interests of the many coincide with the welfare of all. "The self-interests of the many," was a much simpler phrase to use when the many were disfranchised than when they are enfranchised. "The democratic instinct" is less decisive than was expected, "the people" less coherent than was imagined. Thus also we see how questions of ethical right rather than of political and constitutional right are to occupy the attention of a democracy in power, and that from the moment when a state becomes conscious of its organic wholeness and inter-dependence, co-operation and collectivism become the guiding ideas of national policy—an event which can take place only after a political democracy has been established—natural right, in the liberal sense, gives place to social right as the starting-point of political thought. This is the change which amidst confusion, cross-currents, and baffling revolts is going on in democratic politics at the present time, and the period of transition will end only when some clear idea is held generally by progressive politicians of what the ethical relation of the state to the individual is, and when a practical policy springing from that idea is presented by them to the electors. The Nineteenth Century solved the problem: In whom does the sovereignty rest? the Twentieth is to deal with the more complex and delicate one: What is the Ethic of the State?



THE ETHICS OF INDUSTRIALISM

A DIAGNOSIS

J. A. HOBSON

I.—THE REVOLT OF HUMANITARIAN SENTIMENT

A BROAD, general view of modern industrialism seems indicative of distinct moral advance. Industry—which requires large numbers of men to work in close co-operation upon the same materials, with instruments which they utilise in common, for the production of commodities in which they all have a common interest—and Commerce—which unites by ever closer bonds groups of such workers, over the constantly-widening area of a world market—are laying a firm basis of solidarity of interests, upon which may be built a true temple of humanity. The industrial world thus regarded is a vast mutual benefit society, a continual education in the paths of peace and of practical brotherhood. When each individual worker, be he farmer, weaver, mason, or engineer, comes to understand that the value of every bit of work he does is dependent on the well-being and efficiency of innumerable workers in other trades and other lands, he comes to feel a keener and a more real sympathy with these others. A century ago it was a matter of supreme indifference to Hindoos whether drought spoiled the crops and brought famine to Egypt or to Argentina. Now, the intelligent Hindoo knows that, for good or for evil, his destiny is closely linked with that of all the other nations which contribute to the wheat market of the world. The eulogists of *laissez faire* and the free trade economy have doubtless been too indiscriminate in their exposition of this unseen harmony of interests. But making due allowance for this, the economic



changes summed up in the Industrial Revolution must be accounted great liberating forces. The competitive ideal, that every man should have his chance to do the best work for himself and for the world, was not indeed attained, but some definite steps were taken towards it, by the breaking down of ancient obstructive barriers. In spite of all the misery and degradation which accompanied, and in part resulted from, the earlier phases of the change, modern industrialism may be accredited with a real increase in the sense aggregate of individual freedom, not merely in the negative of abolition of restraints, but in the positive sense of an increase of opportunities for the attainment of a good human life.

What, then, it must be asked, are the causes of that great and spreading discontent which the "business life" arouses in all sensitive moral minds? Larger and larger numbers of those who bring moral reflection to bear upon the conditions of the special trade or profession which they follow, or who attempt to reconcile the wider operations of the commercial world with their finer spiritual aspirations, are driven to deep dissatisfaction, or even to despair.

It becomes evident that if the impulses towards a higher moral life are at all reliable, radical defects underlie the structure of the modern business life. It is not, indeed, unnatural that this should be so. The swift changes of the outward life of industrial nations wrought by the new economic forces must inevitably be attended by serious breaks in the fibres of attachment which connect the outer and the inner, the economic and the spiritual life of individuals and societies, and until new series of attachments have grown up grave maladjustments must continue to exist.

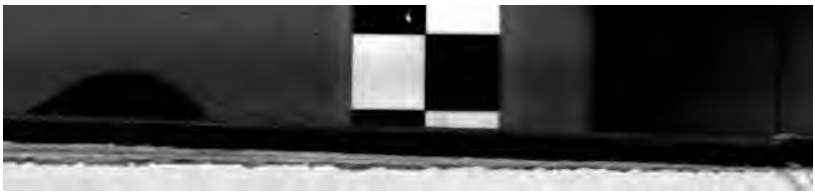
The nature of these maladjustments, and of the moral reforms required to heal them, is best understood by reference to two chief factors, the one material, the other spiritual, in the Industrial Revolution. The chief material agency and instrument of change has been machinery. Machinery has become the autocrat of modern industry, not only determining what work shall be done, how it shall be done, and who shall do it, but fixing the conditions of life for the workers, making



modern towns, and stamping the conditions of machine-made towns upon the character of the nation.

Now, certain essentially dehumanising influences emanate from the reign of machinery. The essence of machine-work is perfection of routine, exact and continual repetition; the unchecked power of machinery reduces all human work to a similar monotony of action, eliminating every element of human interest, spontaneity, and pleasure. Wherever it has complete sway, it tends to mechanise the worker, and to undermine his "manhood"; tireless itself, it pays no regard to the capacity of human endurance, speeding the pace, and lengthening labour-time without limit. Demanding for its most profitable working the close co-operation of large numbers, it obliges increased numbers of human beings to herd together in congested, unsanitary, ugly, and joyless towns. It knows neither sex nor age, but in its economic working imposes a disproportionate share of toil upon women and children, the weaker members of society. Left free to work its will, machinery, in the early decades of this century, was well on the way to achieve the physical and moral ruin of the nation. Successive layers of protective legislation have sufficed to ward off the worst and most immediate perils, but much yet remains to be done by those who recognise the evils which still proceed from an industrial economy designed for the service of society, but over which society has hitherto established no effective or adequate control.

Certain grave dangers arising from this new order of industrialism make distinct and powerful appeal to moral sentiments. The first protests were entirely and narrowly humanitarian. Pity and fairplay are the notes of the earliest criticism, feelings aroused by concrete misery and palpable oppression. These feelings were of the most rudimentary moral order, instinctive in origin, impulsive in operation; they demanded a purely charitable treatment of the social maladies of diseased industrialism. Neither in the current literature, nor in the political and practical philanthropy of this period, are there any signs of an understanding of the momentous issues that were gathering in the world of industry, or of their broader moral implications.



Fiction, in spite of its name, may be taken as the most truthful test of the tone and temper of the educated classes. Yet, what do we find in the novels of the early decades of our century? Though this was the period of deepest degradation and misery into which our nation had ever sunk, with the exception of Disraeli in "Sybil," no great novelist, before Kingsley, in any single novel shows any broad and sympathetic appreciation of "the condition of the people" in relation to its economic causes. Not that the novel was blind to the dramatic and emotional value of particular issues and episodes of the industrial and social anarchy which prevailed. C. Brontë in "Shirley," Mrs Gaskell in "Mary Barton" and "North and South," and various other writers found rich material in strikes and Luddite movements, rick burnings, and the impotent revolts of ignorant groups of labourers against the starved and precarious situation of their lives. But while such writers exhibit keen sympathy with individual cases of suffering, there is an utter absence of all feeling that anything is wrong with the general working of the industrial system; the virtual serfdom of the working-classes is treated as an accepted principle of social life; the notion of an economic revolt, based upon claims for social justice and a better life, is scouted as foolish and reprehensible. Dickens alone, with his wide personal experience, and his genius for sympathy, caught the larger meaning of the humanitarian revolt. He saw and stamped the ineffaceable lineaments of a Gradgrind, a Bounderby, a Dombey, the degradation of John Bull from a generous, if somewhat high-handed farmer, into a cold-blooded, calculating, tyrannical, money-grabbing manufacturer and merchant; he showed the business world as he saw it, hard, mechanical, all-absorbing, demoralising alike by failure or by success. The power of the moral-force Chartists, the thunder of Carlyle's denunciations, the eloquent and passionate pleadings of Kingsley, Maurice, and their Christian Socialists, marked a growing force and definiteness in this humanitarian revolt. From mere detached, instinctive feelings of pity and sympathy with the sufferings of oppressed persons, thus began to arise a gathering sense of moral defects inherent in our industrial institutions. Education and a perception of the wide pre-



valence of common forms of poverty and misery were developing broader lines of criticism; the glaring discrepancies between the professed morality of Sunday and the practical morality of week-days was beginning to disturb the conscience of some sensitive people; social questions, relating to factories and mines, the poor law, sanitation of cities, rights of combination, and the like, began to attract philanthropists and political reformers.

All these movements were distinctively sentimental in their origin, and directly limited and concrete in the reforms they sought to bring about. I do not say this in disparagement. On the contrary, modern history shows that these appeals to prime simple feelings of pity and charity have proved by far the most efficacious motives of practical redress of grievances. A vast reticulation of laws and ordinances attest their growing recognition of the "inhumanity" of modern business. The chief direct agency in most of these reforms was philanthropic, middle-class agitation. Until recent times the prostrate condition of the mass of workers disabled them from clear comprehension of the nature of their economic maladies, while ignorance and political impotence disabled them from seeking effective redress. The modern increased sensitiveness to pain in the psychically-refined classes has been the chief motive of reform. It is true that this sensibility, and the sympathy it brings, have not acted alone. Fear has reinforced pity. Our Poor Law, our Public Health Acts, and not a little of our industrial legislation, are due not wholly to consideration for the poor, but also to a desire to screen the well-to-do from assaults which dirt, disease, and beggary inflict upon their persons, purses, health, and eyesight. The whole tenor of our factory legislation shows this co-operation of selfish and unselfish forces. The first Act of the series, the Health and Morals Act of 1802, was prompted by dread of the ravages of epidemics proceeding from foul factories, as much as by regard for the piteous condition of parish apprentices. So with every subsequent expansion; working-class demands, loudly and often fiercely voiced, have commonly been needed to bring humanity "to the scratch." None the less, this legislation must be regarded primarily as a progress along a line of least resistance before the pressure of humanitarian sentiment. Beginning with the

feeblest and most oppressed class—parish apprentices in cotton mills—a slow but steady extension of protective measures to other industries follows; first other children are taken in, then the age is raised, young persons are included, then women, and finally, for some purposes, men; from cotton mills it proceeds to other textile factories, and ramifies in mines, ironworks, brickfields, and other occupations where the presence of powerful needs is manifested. Beginning with narrowly conceived and ill-administered restrictions upon hours of labour and dangers of machinery, the scope and efficiency of administration have advanced step by step, until they embrace a thousand details of as many separate trades and processes. The story of our Factory Laws is thus an admirable lesson in the psychology of the British mind, and in the paths of social progress which it takes.

II.—THE APPEAL TO INDIVIDUAL GOODWILL

Though modern industry has brought larger numbers of persons into business relations with one another, by large increases of the size of businesses and of the areas of markets, it has not grounded these relations in personal good feelings. Carlyle rightly marked the true nature of modern business life when he described these relations as "a cash nexus." The closer personal relations of the older industry, involving a large measure of mutual understanding and sympathy between master and servant, employer and employed, fellow-employers and fellow-workers, have in large measure disappeared. The very size of modern businesses, the entire severance of functions between masters and men, the limitations of the power of managers, who are less and less the owners of the business they conduct, weaken the old sense of responsibility on the part of the employer; while increasing division of labour and mechanisation of processes, lessening the vital interest of the worker in his work, tends to concentrate it more and more upon his pay. Mobility of labour, alike in the employing and in the employed classes, destroys the ties of locality which once gave stability to industry and brought all the forces of public opinion to bear



upon it. The growing detachment of the people from work and life upon the soil, or under stable conditions of fresh air and elbow-room, inflicts a fatal injury upon home life, the nursery of all the personal and civic virtues.

These salient facts, while they generate evils which appeal to humanitarian sentiments, go far to render such sentiments inoperative for practical reform. *Noblesse oblige* had considerable efficacy where some strong personal nexus, however degrading in character, still subsisted between patron and client, master and dependant; and where it still survives this efficacy remains. But under distinctively modern conditions the *noblesse* cannot realise its obligations by free operation of personal kindliness; its pity is futile, its charity hurts. It cannot, for some brief sentimental purpose, re-establish the personal nexus which all industrial conditions combine to destroy. Tolstoy, in one of his most convincing chapters, has shown the impotence for good of the charitable gentleman who, even with the kindest intentions and the most approved methods, steps from his mansion to help the poor in the city slum. A wider and more penetrating insight condemns the sentiments of pity and charity as feeble palliatives.

So far as "charity," in the narrower sense, is concerned, this is admitted by many educated persons. But what are substantially the same remedies are still relied upon by these same persons for the healing of social and industrial wounds. You may no longer relieve poverty by doles, but you may incite employers to philanthropic treatment of their workers, and stimulate consumers to philanthropic methods of putting down "sweating." It is probable that most of the practical support given by middle-class and upper-class people in recent years to strikes of dockers, miners, quarrymen, etc., is prompted, not by any clear appreciation of the issues between capital and labour, or even by any grasp of a doctrine of a minimum wage, but simply by a feeling that people who do hard or dangerous work ought to have comfortable homes and plenty to eat for themselves and their families. Similarly, the popular conviction that a firm earning high profits, like the Aerated Bread Company, ought to pay decent wages to its employees, implies no theory of monopolies, nor any general



principle of equitable distribution of profits, but merely arises from personal sympathy with the black-dressed, white-aproned waitresses. The blaze of sympathy lately evoked by revelations of shop-life, the horrors of phossy-jaw and lead-poisoning, the fierce indignation against the East London Water Company, are illustrations of the vigour of the simple humanitarian forces. They also illustrate the final inefficacy of these forces, when unguided by larger principles of social justice. The typical remedies of humanitarian charity are palliatives, and even as palliatives are commonly futile. The philanthropic "cure" for sweating through "Consumers' Leagues," exercising a power of boycott and selection, is the classical instance of such failure. Consumers pay low prices for many "sweated" articles, partly because they are poor and must, partly because of their inability to penetrate the intricate recesses of industry through which the goods have passed, so as to assure themselves that they are produced under "fair" conditions. An amateur purchaser, dealing with a professional merchant or manufacturer, is virtually at the mercy of the latter, so far as concerns the treatment of the workers. Even if he organises, and endeavours through detective agents to protect himself against the dangers of buying "sweated" goods, it will not be possible for his agent to trace back beyond the most recent industrial stages the long and complicated history of most manufactured or imported goods. Virtually the scheme is one of futile heroism, an attempt at social progress along a line of greatest resistance.

Equally ineffective in the long run are those appeals to the generosity and chivalry of "captains of industry," to which Carlyle and Ruskin made appeal, and to which Christian Socialists, Positivists, and not a few moral reformers of industry still pin their faith. The notion that individual goodwill of employers can gradually effect a radical redress of working-class grievances and weaknesses sounds plausible while it remains "in the air"; pin it to the ground, and regard it in the light of actual economic conditions, and the forces of "individual goodwill" will be found inoperative by such methods. The obstacles are partly economic, partly psychological. Take first the economic obstacles. Over large areas of industry cut-throat



competition constantly prevails. Where this is the case, the single employer or the single firm, however humane or generous its impulses might be, would be powerless to indulge them in ways which increased their business expenditure. The good employer in these circumstances may always do something, but he cannot do much, to improve the economic conditions of his employees. The prices at which he must sell his goods are determined by the keen competition of the market, and are such as to keep down profits towards a minimum: since the employer must live and pay interest upon his borrowed capital, if he is to continue in the trade, he cannot, by raising wages, reducing hours, or by other "generous" policy, increase his expenses of production. If, as is sometimes maintained, high wages and short hours are good "economy," yielding increased efficiency of labour, all intelligent employers, acting in their own self-interest, will adopt it, and no motive of a moral nature is required. But if reliance is really to be placed upon good-will and the moral appeal, it must be plainly understood that competitive business renders such appeal inoperative.

Where a business, possessing some special advantage in economies of production, some monopoly of market, some legal protection, or support, is screened from "free competition," and is able to earn high rates of profit, a generous policy is economically possible. A large number of businesses are in such a case: municipal services, banking, brewing, mining, manufactures of patent articles, railways, distributive businesses afford many instances. But is it possible, even in such cases, to trust to the efficacy of a moral appeal?

In the typical big business of to-day, the employer is himself a paid servant of a body of shareholders, and has neither the right nor the power to incur expenses on any score of generosity. To get generous treatment out of a majority of shareholders means asking them to take a lower dividend for the benefit of employees whom they have never seen, and to whom they profess no special obligations. Moreover, it must be remembered that, however high the rate of interest may be upon the capital originally subscribed, the majority of existing shareholders have probably discounted these high profits in the price they have paid for their shares, and are not getting more than

what they regard as a minimum return upon their investment. To get generous treatment of employees out of a body of shareholders is seldom found practicable.

The "psychological" barrier to such a policy is hardly less formidable. Close students of industry will recognise that in order to acquire and maintain such a position in business as yields a large and secured income, a long and toilsome struggle is generally necessary, involving harsh, aggressive, and often unscrupulous practices towards trade competitors, employees, or the consuming public. The very conditions of attaining success in such a struggle are such as tend to crush the powers of sympathy, and to harden the emotional nature. Wealth which comes easily, whether by inheritance or by some swift stroke of luck or cunning, is scarcely less demoralising in its effect upon the emotions. In fact, most methods by which great wealth is won, involve natural psychical reactions which disincline and disable the possessor from making a wise and generous use of it. This is the real and conclusive refutation of the theory of benevolent autocracy—viz. that great wealth won by luck, gift, competition, or monopoly, cannot be rationally administered for the good of others.

III.—THE DEMANDS OF JUSTICE

A deeper understanding of economic disorder and of the true needs of reform demands that the instinctive feelings of pity and fairness shall be quickened by an intelligent demand for social justice. The philanthropist must yield place to the social therapeutist and the statesman, if substantial progress towards an ethical democracy is to become possible. This need is not yet generally recognised. Most people still believe that, though modern industrial conditions press hardly and cruelly upon some individuals, and even on whole classes, upon the whole the distribution of work and wealth conforms substantially to the demands of justice. Luck, fraud, force, and ignorance indeed are recognised everywhere to temper the perfection of the working of our industrial system; but, after all, these are held to be exceptional cases, calling for



exceptional treatment. A superficial survey of modern history seems to bear out this view. Industrialism, based upon the voluntary co-operation of individuals working for their mutual benefit, has replaced militarism. The pure theory of *laissez faire* seems just and reasonable, granted equal access to nature, equal opportunities to all to know what work each can best do, and to do it, and to freely dispose of the results. Such "simple system of natural liberty" would establish a true co-operation of the members of an industrial society, prompted indeed each by his own self-interest, but working towards a common rational end.

From the moral standpoint such a system would doubtless be radically defective, in that no conscious desire for the welfare of others would be a motive; but the result would, at any rate, satisfy a general sense of distributive justice. But, in point of fact, no such system of industry exists, or has existed. The slightest probing beneath the smooth skin of these *laissez faire* platitudes shows the normal workings of industrialism riddled with plain and palpable injustice. Inequality of access to nature was early acknowledged as a defect in the just working of competitive industry, though few of those who so acknowledged it have proposed any adequate remedy. Other sources of income besides rent have also been made objects of general and forcible attack. Interest for loans of money, which, under the name of investments, play an ever-growing part in modern industry, has always been assailed, and many who admit the legitimacy of interest *per se*, condemn large departments of money-lending as a "grinding the faces of the poor." The brunt of the attack of modern Socialism is directed against the intrinsic injustice of the wage system, whereby employers are alleged to be able to buy labour below its proper price, while many who are not professed "Socialists" regard the wide prevalence of "sweating" as evidence of a power which employers, as a body, wield to keep down wages.

These attacks upon specific parts of the industrial system are often successfully rebutted by imputing inconsistency and partiality to the indictments. The landowner shows that land is not distinguishable, as an economic factor, from capital; the

capitalist screens himself by the undoubted "abstinence" practised by some owners of capital and by the competition which keeps down to a minimum his "wage of abstinence"; while the employer shows that in paying market rates of wages, he does nothing but what everyone else does when he buys anything.

The general effect of such controversies is to whitewash each particular economic class or factor at the expense of the economic system as a whole. While the great majority, even of educated people, doubtless remains untouched by any definite feeling of injustice, a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the industrial system as a whole is gaining ground among the thinking classes. The crude humanitarianism of pity is yielding place to a more rational humanitarianism, which finds the very processes of bargain and of competition, which are the life of modern industry, morally defective.

Now, scientific scrutiny into industrial processes confirms these suspicions, and unearths two profound and fundamental moral flaws penetrating, not this or that kind of dealing, but business as a whole. I do not wish to overstate the charge, as it is sometimes overstated. The business life is neither absorbed nor chiefly occupied with defective processes of competition or of bargain. The major part of its energy is innocently and even beneficially directed to the detailed application of industrial forces, to the formation or laborious execution of plans and processes which exercise qualities of ingenuity, courage, perseverance and forethought, self-restraint, and harmonious co-operation. It is the critical and determinant acts of the business life which embody immorality and degrade the character. Selfishness is inherent in competition; force is inherent in bargaining. This is not always admitted, but it is true. Some seek to distinguish the competition which evokes a desire to excel in work from that which evokes a desire to defeat others. But the distinction is sophistical. To do good work from love of work or from any worthy motive is not to compete; outside the "fine arts" the "generous rivalry" which finds its chief reward in doing the best work and not in winning the prize, is virtually non-existent. Industrial competition practically means buying and selling by processes which evoke a direct and conscious



antagonism of interest between the competitors. Even if the business man does not always know who his competitors are, none the less his whole conduct in "competition" is based on the supposition that they exist, and is directed towards getting the better of them. This is the moral tap-root. Trade competition directly, forcibly and continually fosters those very qualities of self-assertion at the expense of others which moralists find it most difficult and most necessary to eradicate.

Turn now to bargaining, wrongly confused with competition. Competition is by no means essential to bargaining. The hardest bargains are those which exclude competition. The typical instance of the naked bargain is that between the baker and the starving man. The superior force of the stronger here determines the bargain. This furnishes an extreme instance of injustice. But let competition enter in the shape of a second baker who is trying to oust the first baker from his trade, and our starving friend may get his loaf even below "cost" price"—*i.e.* upon such terms as give him the "better" of the bargain. The point I wish to enforce is, not the extent of the power vested in a stronger bargainer, but the fact that there always is "a better of the bargain" which one side always gets. Put as many competitors as you like on one side and the other, make the market as large and as free as possible, you will never get a bargain or a set of bargains, which tends to distribute the gain equitably. You may get a common price which all sellers take and all buyers pay, but if underneath this price you seek the real gain, you will find that for each buyer and each seller it is different, according as the needs and the resources of each differs from that of the others. Nor is this all. You will find that competition of buyers and sellers, the "higgling of the market," never really settles a price, but only reaches certain limits within which a price is fixed, and that what finally fixes the price is the force or cunning of a single bargainer. There is always a residuum of sheer force which survives the competitive process, and which weights the scales giving an unequal gain to the two sides. It is not a rhetorical exaggeration, but a definitely ascertainable scientific fact, that force is a determinant in

every one of those innumerable acts of bargain or exchange by which the distribution of wealth is achieved.

Genuine economic reform of business life will never be possible until the public intelligence has grasped this central fact, that competition and bargain are essentially unfair, and therefore are socially injurious modes of determining the prices of all things that are sold. There exists no security for equality of gain in any bargain. The common talk of "a fair wage," "a fair rent," or "a fair price," has no validity whatever under present circumstances: these are mere loose phrases to describe cases, where one party has not the other party entirely at his mercy. Accepted industrial methods contain no provision for reaching such "fair" price.

Regarded, therefore, from an ethical standpoint, industrialism does not differ essentially from militarism: it is still the game of war played upon a different plane, with different and more complicated rules, and qualified, as the cruder game is also qualified, by custom, humanity, and positive legislation.

IV.—UNREASON IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

Modern ethics finds the culminating defect of business in the quality of irrationality. Distributive justice appeals not only to good feeling, but also to reason. When a man gets wealth by some lucky turn of the wheel of fortune, or by some sudden *coup*, some brave display of advertisement, or even by gift or inheritance, our reason is not satisfied, we are affected by a sense of insufficient causation. Similarly, when a hard-working man is unable to earn enough to keep his family in decency, to provide against old age or other contingencies, we feel that the economic system is out of joint and operates irrationally.

The "miraculous" attainment of property by chance, fraud, beggary, gift, or by any other mode than that of a personal *quid pro quo* in labour, is irrational, and a business world in which this commonly happens is an irrationally-ordered world and demoralises and degrades the reason of those who are absorbed in it.



This irrationality stands out in a score of different ways. Common experience attests the irrationality of price and price-change. No fixed reliable proportion exists between what one gets and what one gives; a man who works finds that one day his labour is worth so much, the next day so much more or less, without understanding "why," or without recognising the sufficiency of the "why" which is given him. In most cases the "cause" of a price-change is no adequate "reason," and even where such reason exists, it is inevitably hidden from most men, and the feeling of irrationality dominates their mind. Economists claim that every rise and fall of particular stocks not only has some direct cause in the pressure of supply and demand, but that it serves a social purpose in directing the useful flow of capital. But while the theory is correct, it is wofully impaired by practice, where bulling and bearing, rings and corners, manipulation and gambling of every kind, defeat the reasonable uses of a "money market," and make chance and fraud habitual and often dominating factors.

Again, the prevailing characteristic of all modern industrial and commercial life is insecurity, uncertainty about the future. Under some circumstances this quality does not degrade. Where, by reasonable care and forethought, such insecurity can be overcome, it may stimulate and educate provident contrivances, brace the character and widen the intellectual and moral outlook. But where no reasonable exercise of mental and moral power can win security, the result is to demoralise the character either by an appeal to reckless improvidence, or by the feeling of harassing and impotent anxiety which it generates.

This impotent anxiety and reckless speculation, caused by increasing inability to make safe forecasts, not merely derationalises "business men," but contaminates the mind of the general public by the methods of business it induces.

Modern advertising is a liberal education in "unreason." The fact, that profitable businesses can be built up entirely by hypnotic suggestions brought to bear upon the public mind by constant reiteration of self-recommendatory phrases, is perhaps the strangest commentary extant upon the popular

notion that "man is a rational animal." While the object of this advertising, and its kindred arts of push and display, is to achieve the unsocial end of diverting business from one channel into another, its effect is to bewilder and confuse the public mind by a medley of mostly false and mutually destructive information. The closely-related arts of adulteration and concealment, under the pressure of the same forces, have invaded nearly every department of trade and inflict upon the public the derationalising and humiliating process of being made the constant victim of a lie.

I have confined myself in this matter chiefly to the case of business men and the public in their capacity of consumers. But many of the evils named, and others too, weigh even more heavily upon the wage-earning classes. Those who sometimes express surprise that education does not do more to cultivate and rationalise "the masses," fail to realise the forces which fight against enlightenment. The insecurity of work and livelihood to which most workers are subjected is a heavy premium upon improvidence and mental apathy, for, by no taking thought for the morrow that is within their power can adequate security be gained. The trade forces which determine large fluctuations of employment, and even the minor changes affecting the particular firms for which they work, not merely lie quite outside their control, but affect their lives as utterly incalculable blows of fortune. The same holds of fluctuations in their wages, over which they really exercise little control, even when they are organised for this particular purpose. The same causes expressed in terms of work are constantly followed by different results in wages, and a corresponding disorder and unreason is imposed upon the expenditure which goes to form the "standard of living." A standard which shrinks and swells for no ascertainable cause is properly no "standard," but an illusive measure impressing shiftiness and disorder upon the life it is designed to support.

When to these chronic defects of labouring life we add an excessive and often a brutalising burden of physical toil, ever tending towards a narrower specialisation of the working energy upon a single mechanical or routine process, and



falling, by a fatal accuracy of inhuman logic, with greater relative force upon the weaker women and children, whose labour can be got cheapest, we understand how inadequate are all directly educative forces to "rationalise" the lives of the workers. The "self-education" of working-class movements, trade union, co-operative, friendly society and the various religious, political, and recreative organisations has done something to counteract this "irrationalism" of industry; the public machinery of schools, museums, libraries, etc., has done something. But when all is said and done, "industry" vastly outweighs these other interests, and the mechanism of wages and of prices are the most potent and essential factors of working-class life. So long, therefore, as these factors are impressed with their present character of inhumanity, injustice, and unreason, the modifying influences which self-help, philanthropy, and the state bring to bear upon the life of the people can lay no sufficient basis of moral satisfaction. George Meredith has summed up the great need of our age in a memorable saying, "Unless the sense of justice be abroad like a common air, there's no progress and no steady advance."

OUTLINES OF A CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY

PART I

An endeavour to outline, not the specific measures or methods of reform, but the general character of those economic changes involved in progress towards an ethical democracy, will rightly emphasise the psychical conditions which give motive and validity to these changes. Not the perfection of industry regarded objectively as a part of the cosmos, but the perfection of human life and character is our standpoint. In our broad survey, therefore, of the defects of existing industry and of desirable reforms, we are primarily concerned with human motives and with those wider interests which are termed principles. This consideration suggests two fundamental tests of sound reform. First, individual character must be main-



tained and developed by every good economic reform. In order to this end every interference with or dictation to the individual regarding the use of land, capital, labour, or any other economic power, must justify itself by showing that by interference with an abuse of power, it is increasing the aggregate of human liberty. Not only must every such reform increase the area of economic opportunity, so offering a stimulus to useful individual activity, but its character and method must convince the general intelligence that the reform is just in itself, and justly executed. No specious appeal to short-range utility and mere class interest can have any other than a degrading influence upon individual character. Ethical democracy demands the subordination of class feelings and class movements to a broader conception of social progress. The gravest wrong and danger of advanced economic movements of to-day is the masquerading of class enmity under the cloak of social justice. Much of the injustice which such men and such societies denounce is real, many of the reforms which they demand are desirable, but the spirit which animates alike their denunciation and their demands is too often little better than a composite of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. To exorcise these evil spirits and to evoke the passion for justice, is the most urgent need of our times. Until the saner, kindlier, broader feelings are evoked, no great measures of economic reform are practicable, for the dominion of these lower moral powers precludes the possibility of strenuous effective democratic policy; if attained by some untoward combination of chance and force, the external gains would be outweighed by the bad moral reactions the victory would bring. A mere mechanical co-operation of trades or working-classes, each animated by a special interest of its own, cannot succeed and ought not to succeed in effecting any substantial change of industrial conditions. Both concrete reforms, and methods of attaining them, must strengthen the moral character of individuals, and must be direct feeders of a spirit of ethical democracy, which shall bind individuals and classes by a conscious bond of moral fellowship.

But granting right motives, what are the general lines of economic progress? In broadest terms, the answer will be



this, "To secure economic opportunities of good work and good life for all." From this large principle we can deduce a number of middle or more practical rules of reform. The first demand of ethical democracy is that all must work for their own maintenance and for the general good. There must be no idle or "unemployed" class in society. The existence of a class which either must or may be idle, or at best may screen their idleness by a mere show of inefficient and insufficient work, is a powerful agent of corruption in the Social organism, draining the economic resources by its parasitic habits, and tainting the moral atmosphere by its disorderly life.

Modern industrial civilisation has evolved two classes of unemployed or insufficiently employed, related in economic origin and in moral nature. A lower class of unemployed arises whose undoubted inefficiency appears partly the cause, partly the result of an inability to get enough well-paid regular work to do. Analysis of the working of present industry, however, discloses the necessity of a large margin or surplus of unemployed, a fluctuating class which must be regarded as a direct social product. The most pressing need of economic reform has reference to this class which, by the economic drain it exercises, and by the moral contamination of its presence, grievously injures the feebler portions of the regular working-classes, crippling the pace of progress for the whole. Society which permits these persons to be born, and theoretically guarantees their livelihood through the Poor Law, is bound alike by justice and by logic to guarantee to them the opportunity of working for a livelihood. Enlightened social policy requires that the State, as the only adequate instrument of society, shall secure to all not an empty liberty to labour, but a positive economic opportunity of doing such work as may enable them to contribute, as much as they can, to their keep and to the social welfare. This may be and is achieved in two ways. First, by allowing free access to land and natural opportunities, the right to make a livelihood by "squatting." Secondly, where no sufficient or suitable land is available, the State provides public workshops. The justice and fuller utility of this policy is not yet adequately seen, but most civilised



States are feeling their way along this path of a public guarantee of work. Not only must work be provided for those who cannot get their proper share in the outside struggle, but this work must have due regard to skill and capacity, and must have no stigma of degradation attached to it. The detailed difficulties regarding pay, disposal of the products, etc., are doubtless serious, as also is the fact that when measured by the outside market such state-furnished labour cannot be expected to furnish in product the equivalent of its wages or keep. But these difficulties will be met and overcome by a society which realises its economic and its moral duties towards itself and its members.

There also exists a class of upper "unemployed," an idle class living wholly or in part upon unearned elements of income. The economic and moral corruption involved by this mode of living eats down through the different strata of professional and commercial life, as the related corruption of the lower unemployed eats upwards. The fact that they can be, and often are, idle, thinly veiling idleness by sport or some amateur or sinecure employment, is as bad for them as it is for society. Proper analysis of the correlation of economic forces indeed shows this power to live on "unearned income" to have the closest causal connection with the "unemployment" of the poor: the two phenomena are the convex and the concave of the same social fact. The plain duty of society towards this unoccupied class is to compel it to work by making a careful organised attack upon the economic sources of its unearned incomes. No sophistical juggles about rights of gift or inheritance, no abuses of the economic law of interest, must blind us to the duty imposed upon every member of society to do personal service to society, and the corresponding duty of society to insist that such individual services are actually rendered. This end can only be obtained by making it impossible for any man to live in any other way than by honest labour. Whatever rights over private property be conceded, such concessions must stop short of the opportunity to live an idle life. Even to be compelled to argue such a point proves how feebly social ethics are yet developed. No one can gain, every one



must lose, both physically and morally, by the existence of economic conditions which enable a man capable of work to live in idleness.

But most unearned elements of income seem to escape this condemnation, because they form parts of the income of men who do work, and sometimes hard work. It is, however, also a sound moral precept that "the labourer should be worthy of his hire," that social justice involves the recognition of some right proportion between effort and reward. A sound conception of Ethical Democracy requires that the vague feeling of unfairness which causes a comparison of the wages of a manual labourer with the profits of a financial or manufacturing millionaire, shall become a definite sense of injustice, informed by knowledge of the particular economic advantages or monopolies enjoyed by the millionaire, and that society shall undertake the difficult and complicated work of attacking all the roots of his monopoly.

PART II

This establishment of distributive justice by removing the roots of unearned incomes can only be attained, some hold, by a complete assumption of all control of industry by the State. But it is probable that a more discriminative policy would be found equally consonant with social justice and far more feasible. Those elements of unearned income derived from ownership of land and natural opportunities will yield to a growing demand for public ownership of and direct public control over land. Such measures of land reform have a supreme importance for the life and work of the public. More urgent even than the stoppage of the unjust flow of economic rent into private hands is the need of public control over land, in order to safeguard the material basis of family life, the Home, which everywhere is threatened by abuses of landownership conjoined with other subversive economic forces of modern industry.

The Housing Problem, alike in town and country, is fraught with the most vital issues; a cheap, sanitary, spacious, stable fabric of a home, in wholesome, agreeable, and stimulating



surroundings, is a prime necessary of wholesome family life. Such a home is impossible for the vast majority of the people under existing land tenure. No tinkering policy of palliatives will avail much. Until the body of citizens own their city, the body of villagers their village, no adequate security exists for effective administration in the interests of the people. The ethical importance of such reforms will appear supreme to all who recognise how fixed local associations and attachments form the vital condition of that sound family life and that sound neighbourhood which are alike the political and moral units of the larger social life.

There can be no genuine self-respect, no freedom, and no opportunity of steady, social growth when homes can be broken up and whole districts depopulated by the whim or the selfish interest of a private landowner.

Though the local needs of home life give the greatest urgency to land reform, the other public interests which war against private ownership of land are numerous. Air, water, sunshine, belong to him who owns the land, and a nation of town dwellers is either precluded from full enjoyment of these gifts of nature or is rack-rented for their use. Quick and facile movement from one place to another for persons and for goods is essential to modern life; but on the basis of land monopoly are erected various monopolies of transport, which cripple the freedom and tax the resources of the people. The supreme importance which the soil of their country possesses for a nation as the source of its natural wealth, and in particular as the chief source of its food supply, requires every state to ensure that its soil is neither injured nor wasted by being put to vain or unprofitable uses, a duty the performance of which is inconsistent with private ownership. A clear recognition of the importance of retaining a large agricultural class, living and working on the soil under conditions of health, hope, and freedom, as a physical and moral backbone of national character, imposes upon modern civilised States a special obligation to protect peasant life against the forces of decay which are everywhere visible, by securing for the workers in agriculture such freedom in the conduct of their business, and such security in the results of their labour, as



are efficient stimuli to sound industry. In what bodies public ownership and control of the land should be vested, how such ownership should be acquired, how such control enforced, are matters of politics, but that private ownership of any lands is inconsistent with the principles of democracy in a thickly peopled State should be self-evident.

But if absolute private ownership of land is a danger to the commonwealth, similar dangers lurk in other forms of private ownership over the sources or means of production of the necessaries of life. Because all material wealth comes originally from the soil, it by no means follows that it can only fall under dangerous monopoly in its condition of raw material, or that industrial liberty and equality are secured by solution of "the land question." All over the industrial field, in the extractive industries, in manufacture, transport, wholesale and retail trade, we find the growth of monopolies of production or of market, sometimes with legal protection or support, sometimes the result of private combinations using their economic forces to crush free competition, and to secure autocratic powers over the supply of some necessary or convenience of life. It is from such sources, and by such methods, that most unearned elements of incomes are derived. The public safety of modern communities presses for careful but drastic measures to be taken against these anti-social forces. Two principal modes of social protection and redress suggest themselves, and are made bases of experiment. These businesses may be left to private enterprise, and Society may seek to reclaim, by means of taxation of incomes or profits, the products of monopoly. How far this method of redress is feasible depends in large measure upon the ability of public officials to detect and frustrate the secret and complicated financial schemes by which able and often unscrupulous business men will seek to defend their fortunes of monopoly. It seems likely that public control, whether by taxation or by legislative restrictions, will prove ineffective in many cases, and that Society, by means of the State or the municipality, will be more and more compelled to administer businesses which have left the state of competition and have ripened into monopolies. Practical socialism,

undertaken partly for the protection of the workers, but chiefly for the protection of the consumers, will probably comprise an ever-increasing number of what may be termed "routine services"—*i.e.* industries of production or distribution which are engaged in catering for the ordinary everyday needs of citizens. Gas and water are doubtless forerunners of a long series of public industries, the pace of this "Socialisation" being determined partly by the rate at which anti-social combinations are formed and effectively maintained, partly by the ability which public bodies manifest for the efficient commercial management of various lines of industry.

A fuller recognition of the meaning of the corporate life of a society will oblige us to admit that this growing industrial life of the State is a necessary condition of its moral health. Just as it is essential to the progress of the moral life of the individual that he shall have some "property," some material embodiment of his individual activity which he may use for the realisation of his rational ends in life, so the moral life of the community requires public property and public industry for its self-realisation, and the fuller the life the larger the sphere of these external activities.

The attainment of Ethical Democracy demands also vital changes in the conditions of labour and the reward of labour. Not merely is security of work required, but security of good work. The prime demand of social morality is that everyone be treated as an end, no one merely as a means or instrument for the end of another, whether that other be an individual or Society itself. Now, one of the plainest and worst tendencies of modern industry has been, by excessive subdivision of labour, absorbing the entire energy of the worker, to degrade large numbers of the workers into mere machines, reducing to a minimum all the interesting and humanising influences of labour. There is no falser and more injurious cant than the common talk about "the dignity of labour." Much labour, perhaps most labour under present conditions, is not dignified but degraded and degrading. It may be and is better for a man, and in that sense more dignified, that he should labour at some "base mechanic" trade, as Mr Ruskin correctly



phrases it, than that he should let his hands "rust in ignoble ease"; but to pretend that the work of a navvy, an iron puddler, a corn porter, or any machine tender, is dignified, in the sense in which the work of a cabinetmaker, a jeweller, a skilled stonemason, is dignified, is a brazen mendacity. A great deal of the work of the world which is both useful and necessary is not and cannot be made directly to contribute to what is rightly regarded as the dignity of manhood. Some moral good may doubtless accrue from recognition of the utility attaching to the labour that one does, and this respect for labour, and the consciousness of labour as a common bond of service among all members of society, should be a genuine source of moral strength to a democracy. But for all that, when we regard objectively the character of work, we must acknowledge a deep and vital difference between mechanical work and those arts by which the individual expresses his creative or constructive facilities through skilled workmanship. This latter work alone can be regarded as dignified, and the demand of "good work for all" requires that all shall have the opportunity of sharing in it. To overthrow the reign of machinery and division of labour is neither feasible nor at all desirable; but no man should be made the slave of the machine by having his whole working energies devoted to this service. Machinery is labour-saving, but the labour saved for one man should not be thrust upon another. The social economy of machinery consists in continually reducing the proportion of working time and energy which needs to be devoted to bare mechanical labour, and sets free a larger proportion for leisure and for finer sorts of work. To realise this social economy and embody it in a saner industrial order will be a chief task of democracy. The strenuous, broad-spread and growing pressure for a reduction in the hours of labour has its root motive not only in a legitimate demand for relief from the over-pressure of competitive industrialism and the attainment of more leisure for home life, but in the demands of the other faculties of manhood, stunted and atrophied by narrow mechanical specialism, which crave time and energy for their wholesome exercise. The "eight hours day" is not primarily a demand for leisure, or even for mere

recreation, wholesome and necessary as both these are: it is a demand for the opportunity of self-expression, of a fuller, more rounded, and progressive personality. The full meaning of this is not consciously realised by the mass of toilers, nor will the wholesome fruits of increased leisure be at once attained: for some time the tares of vitiated, brutal habits may outgrow, and even choke, the slower-growing plants of wholesome tastes, but the latter are deep-rooted in the common needs of humanity, and will win their way. Not idleness, but other kinds of work, the interesting and enjoyable exercise of faculties thwarted by over-specialism will be the kindly fruit of a reduction of the hours of labour. Thus can good work be secured for all: the best work is, and always must be, voluntary.

Certainty and sufficiency of employment we have seen to be essential conditions of sane working life. Not less degrading and injurious than insecurity of work is the prevalent instability of payment. Not merely does it wreck the possibility of a rational ordering of material life, but it operates even more injuriously upon morals by forcing continually to the front those antagonisms of interest between individuals and classes necessitated by incessant readjustments of scales of payment. The culminating degradation of industry consists in making profits and wages, not good work, the end of industry. Just in proportion as the consciousness of any worker is set, not upon his work, but upon what he is to get for it, is he degraded. This is the reason why in all ages and all countries retail trade has been regarded with suspicion and contempt. Modern enlargements upon the experience of the past indicate what direction radical reforms of this evil are likely to take. Talk about "the abolition of the wage system" is commonly as vague as it is heroic. What is feasible is the gradual enforcement of the principle of a living wage, embodied in a minimum standard of comfort for a class, until the present system of determining wages by competition in the labour market, operating through piece or time payment, has given way to a system of fixed salaries for guaranteed employment. This system already prevails for most distinctively official work, and for the higher grades of employees in private businesses:



there exists no reason, economical or other, to prevent its extension through the lower grades.

Public services can do, and are doing, much to forward this radical alteration in conditions of industry by the growing admission of a standard wage with security of tenure of employment. Private businesses may, perhaps, have the sound economy of this practice brought home to them more effectively when the expansion of public services, adopting this method of remuneration, is found to draw into the public employment all the most intelligent and efficient workmen of the community.

Along these lines it seems possible to work towards an ethical democracy governed in accordance with economic principles of justice and humanity, which, by the subversion of oppressive monopolies, the repression of needless and injurious hazard and speculation in trade, security of regular, good, moderate, well-remunerated labour for all, and idleness for none, shall impose rational order upon the industrial life, and make it a chief feeder of the moral life of a nation.

But can the State and the Municipality be relied upon to perform with honesty and efficiency the enlarged duties devolving upon them in accordance with such a scheme of ethical democracy as is foreshadowed here? Those who recognise the claims of social justice and the character of society as a distinctively moral organism, deriving its spiritual sustenance through innumerable suckers from the life of moral personalities, will not despair of the possibility. It is not a question of constructing an official mechanism for the fulfilment of functions to which it has no natural affinity, but a question of society, through the natural growth of social institutions, undertaking, for its further protection and more perfect development, this administration of a property which, as the product of forces which are continually more social in origin and operation, must be distinctly recognised as a "social property," involving such public administration not merely as a right, but as a duty. The "State," regarded as a mechanism, would be inadequate to such a task; the State as an organism, with capacity of growth and adaptation, is capable, like every moral organism, of rising to its obligations, and generating the energy required for their fulfilment.

THE FAMILY

J. H. MUIRHEAD

THE problem of the relation between Democracy and Ethics may be said to reach its acutest phase in connection with the Family. In a literal sense it here comes home to each of us. Assuming that Democracy, with its ideal of liberty and equality, represents, on the whole, the line of human progress, What, we ask, is likely to be its ultimate effect on a structure which, in the form generally accepted at present, seems to presuppose a permanent inequality and subjection on the side of one of the partners? To this question we know that the advanced advocates of Democracy have not been slow to give an answer. "In proportion," says Laveleye,* "to the development of that which we are accustomed to call civilisation the feelings of filial devotion and family ties become weaker and exercise less influence on the actions of men. This fact is so universal that we may regard it as a law of social development." "The present marriage system," write Mr Morris and Mr Bax,† "is based on the general supposition of economic dependence of the woman on the man and the consequent necessity for his making provision for her which she can legally enforce. This basis would disappear with the advent of social economic freedom, and no binding contract would be necessary between the parties as regards livelihood; while property in children would cease to exist and every infant

* "Primitive Property" quoted in Bebel's "Woman," Eng. Tr. p. 116.

† "Socialism: Its Growth and Outcome," p. 299. Similar anticipations will be found in Fabian Essays, pp. 146 and 200. They are shared in by the opposite school of extreme individualists. See, for example, Mr Edward Carpenter's, "Love's Coming of Age."



that came into the world would be born with full citizenship and would enjoy all its advantages whatever the conduct of its parents might be."

The view, however, that the family is destined to undergo fundamental changes in the near future is not confined to the extreme schools of social reformers. It is shared by more staid critics of modern tendencies, and among others by Charles Pearson, the suggestive author of "National Life and Character." In the chapter of that work entitled "The Decline of the Family," Pearson only gives form to a widely spread impression that we are in the full tide of a movement the issue of which can only be the disintegration of the family group and the transference of the functions that have hitherto been performed by it to the State. The object of this paper is to inquire, so far as its limits permit, first, from the point of view of the origin and function of the family as we know it, and, secondly, from the point of view of the actual changes that are going on around us, what ground there is for these anticipations.

The revolutionary view, as we have seen, is that the monogamic family in origin and function is a consequence of private property and of the male egoism which sought to perpetuate it to the disadvantage of woman. As the ideas then on which it rests—the subordination and dependence of women, the ownership of children, respect for individual ownership of property in general, and inheritance in particular—become undermined, its foundations are sapped, and the institution prepared for dissolution. From the outset a morbid growth upon the natural relations of male and female, it now remains one of the most serious obstructions to social progress. As this theory is current alike among individualists and socialists,* and, so long as it is so, must

* Besides the above passages *cf.* Mr Carpenter's statement *op. cit.*: "Far back in history, at a time when in the early societies the thought of inequality had hardly arisen, it would appear that the female, in her own way—as sole authenticator of birth and parentage, as guardian of the household, as inventress of agriculture and the peaceful arts, as priestess and prophetess or sharer in the councils of the tribe,—was as powerful as man in his, and sometimes even more so. But from thence down to to-day

constitute an obstacle to clear thinking, we may begin by asking how much support it obtains from the actual facts of the history of the European Family.

In his classical treatment of this subject, in his book on "The Aryan Household," Hearn has shown beyond controversy that monogamy in primitive society existed long before private property and performed quite other functions than its perpetuation. It is true that the wife was, in theory, owned by her husband, along with his children and other household goods, but it is not true either that this ownership was founded on individual right, or that it had for its end merely the perpetuation of the family inheritance. In the Aryan household, at least, the wife was only owned, like other property, in trust for the corporation of the tribal group. The free independent man of the monogamic stage of marriage is as mythical a personage as the free independent woman who figures in the golden age of polygamy to which reformers of a certain type habitually appeal. The house-father was only the temporary representative of a great corporation (including the countless dead as well as the countless unborn), on whom devolved for the moment the duty, in the first place, of performing the family rites on which the prosperity of the tribe depended, and, secondly, of securing that when he was gone the hearth should not be left desolate for want of an heir to continue them. Let the believer in the early tyranny of individual man consider what was implied in the duty that tribal custom imposed on the brother of a house-father who died without a child of divorcing his own wife and marrying the widow, in the hope that he might raise up seed unto his brother.

The family, as we know it, is the lineal descendant of this tribal conception modified by later influences, of which the chief was undoubtedly the Christian religion. It is sometimes said that monogamy is the *product* of Christianity. Nothing, of course, could be further from the fact. Christianity found

what centuries of repression, of slavehood, of dumbness, of obscurity have been her lot!" And Bebel *op. cit.* p. 231: "The bourgeois marriage is a consequence of bourgeois property. This marriage standing as it does in the most intimate connection to property and the right of inheritance demands 'legitimate' children as heirs."



monogamy already existing. It aimed, indeed, at correcting the licence of divorce that then prevailed. But this was itself an abuse following on the custom of civil marriage which had to a large extent taken the place of the ancient sacrament.* To us, looking back from the point of view of recent changes in opinion, the teaching of Christ himself, with its emphasis on the unity of the family on the one hand and the dignity of womanhood on the other, might well seem to contain the germs of a higher theory of family life, uniting what is good in the old tribal or religious, and the newer contractual or civil ideal. But the time was not yet; the teaching of the Gospels was one thing, the teaching of Paul and of the Roman law was quite another. Paul distinctly teaches the subordination of women. "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church." At times he seems to extend only a cold toleration to the married state. "He that giveth [his daughter] in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." On the other hand, the Church adopted from the Roman Law its whole theory of the civil position of women. "Women," said the Roman Law,† "are removed from all civil and public functions, and consequently cannot act on juries, nor hold offices of state, nor sue, nor intervene on behalf of another, nor be procurators." "The law," says Bodin, interpreting the Christian theory, "has forbidden to women all burdens and offices proper to man, such as judge, advocate, and similar affairs, not only from prudence, but as much because manly actions are contrary to the sex, to feminine shame and modesty."‡ It is true that the Council of Trent declared

* It is interesting to notice, from the point of view of the present argument, that this change from the religious to the civil marriage, so far from being associated with any improvement in the condition of women, in reality gave them a far less secure and dignified position in society than they held under the old organisation.

† Ulpian, Dig. L. 17.2.

‡ Speaking of the old law of England, an American writer truly says that just as under Roman law the husband held his wife's life in his hand, so by the old law of England he might castigate her for certain offences. He adds, "to this right the men of the lower classes of the English people still fondly cling."

marriage to be a sacrament, and that the Church has always regarded it as indissoluble; but in other respects it left the position of women where it found it as defined by the Roman Law.*

The question, however, of the origin of the family and of the ideas which underlie its original structure, may be admitted to be of slight importance as compared with that of the function it performs under modern conditions. Is it true, as the writers already quoted agree in maintaining, that, apart from the doubtful exception of the support it gives to the institution of private property, the family performs no function that could not be better performed by the state or municipality?

Whether we look to the means by which the human race is maintained from generation to generation at its present level of adaptation for the social state, or at the means by which each generation is trained in the use of the social qualities it inherits, there is reason to believe that these writers have altogether underestimated the importance of the family. To take the latter of these points first, nothing is more striking in the proposal to abolish the family than the assumption that the ethical functions it at present performs in training the affections and moulding the will into a form of which subsequent social education is merely an extension, can be taken over not only without loss but with appreciable gain by the public nurse and board school teacher. No modern reformer will deny that a great deal may be done in the intelligently managed *crêche* to supply the place of the influence of a parent and the intimate yet restraining affections of brothers and sisters, where these are necessarily absent; but those who have most experience of the working of such institutions are the loudest in deprecating the extension of a system which, at the best, is a mere stop-gap. Much has been made by Socialist writers of the selfish isolation† of the family, and much that they say is only too true. The family has often fallen far short of its ideal as the nursery of the

* As Sir Henry Maine truly says, "The Christian ideal of the family is the Roman purified from licence of divorce."

† See Fabian Essays, quoted above.



social will, but we have yet to learn how the brotherhood of mankind can be developed in a generation which has had no opportunity of experiencing the natural sentiment that corresponds to it. Until the teaching of the whole course of human experience has here been reversed, we may be content to accept as final on this head the great saying of Burke, that "We begin our public affections in our families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. The love to the whole is not extinguished by this subordinate partiality. Perhaps it is a sort of elemental training to those higher and more enlarged regards, by which alone men come to be affected as with their own concern." *

The abuses to which it is liable are no more an argument against the institution itself than the abuse of the franchise to promote a class interest at the expense of the community, or of freedom of speech to preach anarchy is an argument for the abolition of these rights. It proves that in the use of the family, as in the use of the franchise and the right of free speech, the community has still much to learn. It does not prove that it could ever learn it without the aid of these institutions themselves.

The teaching of sociological theory has received as little attention from the writers referred to as that of educational experience. Most of them, indeed, would probably accept the view that natural selection operates in human societies as among animal organisms; and yet it is not too much to say that their whole teaching on the subject of the family is in flagrant contradiction to this admission. One looks in vain in their writings for any appreciation of the fact that not only has civil marriage established itself in all western nations, but, as Westermarck† has recently shown, monogamy, contrary to current preconceptions, has all along been the predominant form. This fact alone might have suggested that, quite apart

* "Reflections on the Revolution in France." The same thought occurs in another passage which can never be quoted too often: "To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ, as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind."

† "History of Human Marriage," pp. 459, 505.

from the avarice of individuals, there is something socially advantageous in the system which makes the parent responsible for the support of his own children. Nor is it difficult to discover what this is. The society which, by the pressure of public opinion or of legislation, has encouraged the idea that a man shall not undertake the responsibilities of a family without some reasonable hope of being able to fulfil the obligations implied, has at least some guarantee that only those shall do so who possess the qualities required for social co-operation, and has tended to reap the advantage that such a selective agency confers. And if this has been so in the past, is there any reason to expect that it will be otherwise in the future? On the contrary, all the evidence that is to hand points to the still greater importance of maintaining, under modern conditions, the idea of parental responsibility. It seems certain that, owing to improvements in the material environment, many who in former times would have succumbed to such forms of selective agency as are represented by bad sanitation and preventable disease are now preserved and enabled to propagate their disabilities. A fact like this does not, of course, provide us with an excuse for the neglect of material improvements. It does, however, constitute an additional reason why those who have at heart the permanent improvement of the condition of the people should realise on what forces they have to depend in the future for continued improvement, or at least for the prevention of degeneration in the race. One of the most important of these is, undoubtedly, the sense of social obligation on the part of the would-be parent. Surely there is every *a priori* reason why the social reformer who is in earnest about his business should be anxious to strengthen this sense where it already exists, to create it where it is absent. And if this is so, what are we to say of proposals, such as those advocated by some prominent writers, for the indiscriminate support of children (not to speak of adults), one of the first effects of which would be to weaken this guarantee? Only one conclusion as to the scientific pretensions of such teaching is possible. It is the one drawn by a recent critic of current tendencies. "Nothing," he says, "is more certain than that



if Socialism means the total suppression of the personal struggle for existence, as above described, and the collective guarantee of support to all children, and, still worse, to all adults, without enforcing the responsibilities of parents, or of sons and daughters . . . it really is in hopeless conflict with the universal postulate of the struggle for existence and natural selection, as justly interpreted of human society."*

This argument, it is true, stands on a different footing from that of the preceding paragraph. For it is possible to conceive of a system like that of Plato's Republic under which the State took upon itself the business of selection through control, in the first place, of the kind of citizen who should be permitted to become parents at all, and, in the second, of the kind of child they should be permitted to rear. And, probably, there are some Socialistic reformers who would be prepared to accept this as a legitimate corollary of their proposals. But it would be difficult to reconcile Platonic methods with the views of the larger section, whose main objection to the present system is the obtrusion of law into the strictly personal relations of love and marriage.†

It would be a curious instance of the irony of events if these theorists had their way, and society abolished the family, only to find itself saddled with the responsibility of improving the breed by a system of state-authorised and state-regulated unions. Love would have become "free," but only by having become a public nuisance, perhaps a crime. The legal marriage which we know would be no more; but where should we look for the "real marriage" that was to take its place?

Leaving these more academic discussions, we may now ask whether, altogether apart from extreme doctrinaire views, there is not sufficient in prevailing tendencies to justify the suspicion that the progress of Democracy is, on the whole, hostile to the family. This, as we have seen, is the view of cautious writers like the late Charles Pearson, who pointed

* "Aspects of the Social Problem," p. 306. See the whole essay, "Socialism and Natural Selection."

† See Carpenter, *op. cit.* p. 109. His views on the duty of the community to at least one of the parents are to be found on p. 54, and (by implication) pp. 160, 161.

in proof of it to the recent extensions of the functions of the State over departments of life hitherto entrusted to the family. The above argument in proof of the permanent utility of the family as the unit of social life only makes it all the more incumbent on us to consider how much truth is contained in this contention with a view to practical guidance in the future.

We may begin by noticing that it seems to draw *prima facie* support from actual Statistics which go to show both that there are fewer marriages in proportion to population, and that unions are less lasting than formerly. Mr Ogle* has shown, in reference to the first of these points, that, taking all classes together, the marriage-rate in England fell between 1851 and 1881 from 17·2 to 15·2 per cent., and that between 1873 and 1888 the ages of men and women who marry rose respectively from 25·6 and 24·2 to 26·3 and 24·7, and this notwithstanding the fact that the average price of wheat fell from 38s. 6d. in 1851 to 31s. 10d. in 1888, while the price of British exports per head of population rose during the same period from £2, 14s. 4d. to £6, 4s. 11d. The statistics of divorce, which go to establish the second point—viz. the diminished stability of marriages,—are still more striking. The rise in the number of divorces during the quarter of a century between 1860 and 1885 seems to have been universal. To quote the case of England and America alone, while in 1871 England and Wales show 1 divorce to 1020·4 marriages, in 1879 this had become 1 in 480·83. Between the years 1867 and 1886 divorces in the United States are said to have increased 157 per cent., while the population showed an increase during the same period of 60 per cent.† Some of the individual States showed a very high average. An American writer‡ quotes statistics from Massachusetts showing that divorces rose from 1 in 51 marriages in 1860 to 1 in 21.4 in 1878.§

* *Journal of Statistical Society*, June 1890, p. 254.

† See Lecky's "Democracy and Liberty," vol. ii. p. 173.

‡ Thwing, "The Family," p. 153.

§ With these results the reader may compare the remarkable difference between Protestant and Catholic countries in this respect, as brought out by Oettinger, "Moral-Statistik," third ed. p. 168: "In Switzerland, in the year 1879, there were eight times the number of divorces in the Protestant as compared with the Roman Catholic cantons, although the population is



No general statistics of this kind, however, are of any value in themselves. We do not require statistics to prove that an immediate consequence of the spread of education and of a higher standard of life is to be looked for in a diminution of early marriages, while an increase of divorce may merely indicate the removal of obstacles to a wholesome recognition of the fact that a marriage-union has ceased to perform its function as a moral influence in the community. To be of any use to us, these facts must be taken in connection with the actual causes which are at work to produce them.

Putting aside the influence illustrated in the above note of the disappearance of the ecclesiastical view of marriage, and confining ourselves to Protestant countries, we may set these causes down under the heads, first, of the growth of collective control; secondly, the extension of educational and industrial opportunities; and, thirdly, of political and legal rights to women.

1. The theory that the extension of State control into the sphere of the family constitutes of itself an attack upon it, is on a par with that which assumes a fundamental opposition between the extension of law and individual liberty. The whole question turns on the effect that this or that kind of control is likely to produce.

It is, no doubt, true that compulsory education "interferes" with parental responsibility. But it may very well be an interference which is in the interest of the family itself, and ultimately of the feeling of parental responsibility on which its health depends. It is well to remember that for every hour the child spends in the school it used to spend two or three in the factory, and while the influences to which it was there subjected were in their nature hostile to the recognition of family claims, the moral training of the school-room may be directed to reinforce the family virtues of purity, gratitude, and obedience.

A still more obvious instance of collective parenthood which is altogether in the right direction is the act of 1889

only a half larger. In Alsace-Lorraine, since that province came under the Protestant system in 1871, a large increase of divorce has taken place. Between 1874 and 1878 the number of divorces increased fourfold."



giving to Guardians of the Poor the power of retaining control over children, who have been deserted or misused, up to the age of sixteen or eighteen in defiance of the parents.

On the other hand, there is an injudicious collectivism which may well act in the direction of the weakening of parental responsibility and the disintegration of the family. To take only one example: the collective provision of meals and of nurseries for young children, though under exceptional circumstances and with proper safeguards it may serve a useful purpose, requires to be carefully watched. Not only (as has been frequently observed) does it tend to foster the idea on the part of the more thriftless that the support of a family is no necessary part of the duty of a parent, but (what has not received the attention it deserves) such arrangements are apt to weaken the motives that the comparatively well-to-do mother has to remain at home during the day, instead of returning, as she is often too ready to do after marriage, to the shop or the factory.*

The cure here is to be on our guard against the fallacy of arguing that because collective action is beneficial when applied for one purpose it will be equally so when applied to another which bears a general resemblance to it. People, as Jevons says, are always reasoning well or ill—usually ill—and one of the commonest forms of ill-reasoning among social reformers is that of false analogy.

2. Considerations like that just alluded to bring us to the second of the general causes mentioned above—the better education and improved industrial opportunities of women.

That new economic opportunities for women of the middle class should act in a double way upon the institution of the family is only natural. On the one hand, they are a formidable rival in the mind of women themselves to the more domestic form of life which marriage offers. An analysis, made a few years ago, of some fifteen hundred cases of women who have passed through a university training in England showed that the number of marriages is distinctly lower than among an equal number chosen at random from the same class.† The writer draws the conclusion that the

* See below p. 122 n.

† *Nineteenth Century*, June 1895. Of 1486 ex-students of the chief



British parent ought to realise that in sending his daughter to these institutions the chances are much higher in favour of her becoming a teacher than a wife. The reason is partly that new intellectual interests are opened up and college friendships formed which make such women comparatively independent of the companionship of men, but partly also that there is brought into the industrial market a new class of competitors whose standard of wages is no longer what is necessary to support a family, but what is sufficient for an individual; with the result that the general standard of wages is lowered, and it is rendered more difficult for men to earn sufficient to justify them in marrying.

The effect of modern economic conditions upon the working-class family is of course different. It is noticeable rather in diminished coherence than in the diminished number of family groups. The workman is more dependent on a wife for the comforts of a home and for an addition to his wages. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that, contrary to what we might at first expect, marriages on the whole are more numerous in those counties in England in which women are earning independent wages.* On the other hand, the home, when once formed, is apt to be more comfortless on account of the temptation the wife is under to go out to work or to take work home with her.†

Closer analysis, however, shows that while facts like these afford much matter for thought there are here distinctions to be made and other considerations to be taken into account which somewhat change the outlook.

Who, for instance, will deny that the opening of higher education and of new economic opportunities to women of the middle class has already raised the tone of family life, and is likely to do so more in the future? One of the chief sources of ill-assorted and unhappy unions in the past has

women's colleges in England whose after careers had been followed, only 208 (about 14 per cent.) had married; 680 had become teachers.

* *Journal of Statistical Society*, June 1890.

† That this is not always the result of dire necessity is generally acknowledged. Jevons quotes cases in which the wife's wages are supplementary to total weekly earnings of from fifty to sixty shillings. ("Methods of Social Reform," p. 169.)

been the necessity women have been under of providing for themselves by marriage. The want, moreover, of more serious interests has left them without defence against the sentimental novel and other social influences that unite to drive them into marriage at the earliest opportunity. The new chances which are now opening up offer them, in the life of the school-mistress or the government clerk, an attractive alternative. That it has proved so is shown by the statistics above quoted relative to the number of this class who actually marry. The results indicated are not probably to be explained by any aversion on the part of these women to marriage in itself. It is the *kind* of marriage that they see in too many cases around them that disheartens them. For themselves, they are quite properly determined, in a matter so important, to have nothing but the genuine article. They look in marriage not only for the old-fashioned "union of hearts," but for the union of heart and head in some serious interest which will survive the mere attractions of sex and form a solid bond of union even in the absence of others which, like the birth of children, depend on fortune. In all this men have nothing to complain of. If they fail to rise to the occasion, it is their loss. But who that is, in Dante's phrase, "a good hoper" can entertain any fear upon this head or help regarding the reaction that the new movement is already beginning to have upon men as one of its most hopeful signs?

One sometimes hears it said that the transference to machinery of most of the tasks, from the spinning of cloth to the making of candles, which made the wives of our grandfathers so indispensable a part of creation, has acted unfavourably upon the middle-class family. But, again, it may be asked whether we have not here rather an essential condition of the possibility of a higher ideal of family life. Machinery of all kinds is to the life of a people what habits are to the individual. As it is the essential condition of individual progress that acquired dexterities should be handed over to the unconscious mechanism of the lower centres of the nervous system, so it is the condition of the progress of a nation that the hands and minds of the men and women



who compose it should be set free to provide for the higher needs that are always emerging as the lower come to be more easily satisfied. To think that women who have not to scrub and bake, to spin and brew, will find nothing for their hands and minds to do that is worth doing, and when done well is of essential value to family, and through it to national happiness, shows a poor ideal of the equipments that are needful for a truly human life.

That there is a real danger to the family in the more showy life of art, literature, or the public platform may readily be admitted. The danger, however, is not to be met by making it harder for women to enter these fields, but by permitting them to discover for themselves the real value of the results the average woman may hope to achieve in them as compared with the narrower one of the family. It is quite true that the public lecturer, the artist, and the journalist or writer, reach a wider audience (when they reach any at all, which is not always), but when we consider the *power* of the influence which the mother of a family exercises over her children, and the comparative certainty of producing the precise effect she aims at and not (as is so often the case with the politician and writer) something quite different, the balance seems more than redressed.

The questions suggested by the employment of women, and especially married women, in workshops and factories are much wider and much more serious. That such employment is bound to act unfavourably on the health, cleanliness, and moral influence of the home needs no proof. That it is on the increase, and acts with a fatally attractive force on the minds of women who do not absolutely require it, is one of the first things that surprise the middle-class student in his investigation of industrial conditions.* Yet this, too, must be taken along with other circumstances, and chiefly with other forces arising from these industrial tendencies themselves, which tend to counteract or com-

* I have before me the letter of a Trade Union secretary who quotes instances of women who pay 4s. a week for someone to mind the children, while they themselves are earning from 7s. to 9s., alleging as a reason that they are tired of staying at home.

pensate them. Among the latter is to be reckoned the action of Trade Unions and of legislation in limiting the area of women's work. This action is sometimes quoted as an outstanding instance of harsh and arbitrary dealing on the part of trade organisations, and, from the point of view of the immediate motive, there may be some truth in this accusation. But, whatever the motives of these restrictions (and it is as unnecessary to believe that they are wholly selfish as to prove that they are to any large extent unselfish), one of their effects undoubtedly is to give to the chief wage-earner a large measure of security against the lowering of wages, and consequently of the standard of family life.*

The effect of special legislation for women in limiting their industrial opportunities is a disputed point on which it is not necessary here to enter. It is sufficient to notice that so far as it concerns married women it is expressly defended by its advocates on the ground of its wholesome effect upon the family, and witnesses, at any rate, to a general appreciation of the dangers with which the present system threatens the community.

3. The changes in the legal and political status of women within recent years, as they are the most open to middle-class observation, have attracted the most attention. They fall roughly under the heads of enfranchisement, property, divorce. In reference to the first, there is no reason to connect the limited political power which has already been granted, or is claimed on behalf of unmarried women, through municipal votes, with any danger to the family. On the contrary, by assigning women the rights and obligations of citizenship it may very well act in the same direction as improved economic conditions by opening opportunities for usefulness indepen-

* A striking case came before my notice recently of a Yorkshire weaver whose wife, desirous of contributing to the family, and "making"—as the phrase is—"a Saturday night," applied, unknown to him, for work at the factory at which he was employed, and was taken on at 12s. a week. Shortly after, observing that he looked somewhat depressed, she triumphantly explained to him what she had done. She received the reply: "And I have just been told I shall no longer be required, so that we shall have to live after this on 12s. instead of 32s."



dent of marriage to those who are either averse to marrying in general, or to marrying the wrong person in particular.

The case of married women is by many thought to be different. If we hold that the true unit of political life is the family or household, we seem, indeed, forced to hold that there is here a real distinction. But if there is, let us put the case against married-women-suffrage on its true ground. It is not that in the case of political difference between man and wife—the only case that offers a practical difficulty—family peace will be endangered (a vote a-piece would at any rate remove the rankle of injustice), but that the higher form of political personality being realisable only when "husband and wife are of one mind in the State," the absence of this unanimity should obtain no recognition in a divided vote.*

On the head of the improved legal position of women with respect to property, it would probably be difficult to find any educated person who is prepared to regard acts, of which our own Married Women's Property Act may be taken as a type, in any other light than as tardy measures of justice, which, so far from endangering, tend to sweeten and purify family life. Measures of this kind, however, affect but a very small minority, and it is not surprising that some advocates of progress, sympathetically smarting under the humiliation which numbers of married women mutely suffer, owing to their economic dependence, should formulate a claim, founded upon the services they perform to the community as wives and mothers, for a collective guarantee. As, at least, one contributor to the present volume seems to favour this reform, there is the less justification for entering on a criticism of such proposals here. It will be time to do so when a scheme has been formulated to give effect to it. Meantime the difficulties seem considerable. Has it been considered, for instance, what the practical effect would be in the case of the man (and it is such cases which call for the remedy) who habitually conceals his earnings from his wife, if the latter were known to possess an independent source of income? It does not seem to require much penetra-

* Which, of course, in this case, would be a useless vote.

tion to perceive how happily such an endowment would fall in with his private arrangements. Or, again, if the law is to guarantee his wife's "economic independence" out of his own income, what effect on the family peace is likely to result from any attempt to enforce it? In view of these and similar difficulties, may we not venture to ask more generally whether an institution which like the family must depend under any circumstances for its success on a genuine human affection can ever really be made to work where this is absent to the extent supposed, and whether the true line of progress is not to be looked for in quite another direction—viz. an improved capacity for judicious spending (a far too much neglected branch of education) on the part of the wife, improved capacity to understand what this involves on the part of the husband?

What has been said of the Married Women's Property Act holds equally of recent decisions in English law, giving a more liberal interpretation to what is technically known as cruelty as a ground of separation or divorce. What further changes in the direction of facilitating divorce are desirable is one of the most important questions with which the advocate of legal reform can concern himself. One important principle seems to follow as a corollary from all that has been contended for in this paper. In proposed alterations of the existing law we ought to draw a broad distinction between those which have for their purpose merely the recognition of the fact that a family has already been hopelessly destroyed as a moral organism, and those which may have the effect of themselves aiding in the destruction. To the former class, as we shall probably all be agreed, belong laws recognising unfaithfulness as a ground of divorce. Improved moral feeling will probably demand an extension of this principle, and the abolition of any lingering inequality in this respect between the sexes. There is also much to be said from this point of view in favour of recognising desertion after a sufficiently long period,*

* This has long been so in Scotland, in most of the United States of America (the period varying from one to five years), in Prussia, Austria and Hungary, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland.



insanity, and habitual drunkenness under similar conditions, conviction for felony, as grounds of divorce.

On the other hand, laws permitting divorce on the ground of mutual consent or of incompatibility of temper belong to a wholly different category. The very fact that these circumstances may be taken as reasons of divorce, besides putting the unmarried off their guard, would inevitably tend to disincline the married to make any sustained effort to overcome the initial friction which it needs no argument to prove is necessarily entailed by every marriage, however "happy," and which it may sometimes require a serious though by no means an unwholesome effort to allay.* These, however, are all details, and may be left to the sifting criticism of time and experience. Meantime, I may try to sum up the conclusions of this paper.

I have tried, in the first place, to show that the extremer school of democratic reformers, whether Socialist or Individualist, has given insufficient attention to the social functions that the family even in its present imperfect state performs. It is right, of course, to appeal from the cant of tradition to the actual effects of institutions on human happiness. But there is a danger of merely setting up a new form of cant in its place. It is cant to say, "What God has joined let no man put asunder," and to appeal to "a divine institution" against social expediency. But it is no less cant to say that "Love is Free," and to appeal from the legal to the "natural" marriage. I am not sure that the latter kind is not the more pernicious cant of the two. As a reaction against the ecclesiastical theory of the indissolubility of marriage, the free love movement has a certain justification. It is, at anyrate, perfectly comprehensible. Its error lies in abstracting from the power of the will in disciplining and controlling the affections. In this respect it is the opposite of the older French view of the marriage of

* "Falling in love and winning love," says R. L. Stevenson, the best of authorities upon these questions, "are often difficult tasks to rebellious and overbearing spirits; but to keep in love is also a business of some importance to which man and wife must bring kindness and goodwill. The true love story commences at the altar when there lies before the married pair a more beautiful contest of wisdom and generosity."

suitability, the so-called *mariage de convenance*, which takes the will to be all and leaves the growth of affection to time and habit. Extremes meet, and the error of both these views is seen in the tendency of public opinion in France to sanction both forms of marriage and to permit them to exist side by side as complementary to each other.

Secondly, I have tried to show that the new circumstances and the instability they appear to have caused, while they undoubtedly portend change, are not necessarily a sign of "decline" in the family. Decline is defined by the physiologists as "the diminution of the formative activity of an organism." It has yet to be proved that the family is incapable of transforming itself to suit the new environment. The evidence that is already to hand seems rather to prove that its energies are unimpaired, that the required transformation is in the very act of taking place, and that, when it is accomplished, we shall have a form of family life at once more coherent and more stable than any we have yet seen. Opinion, indeed, on the whole subject is much disturbed; but there is, as Meredith sees, "Promise in Disturbance":—

> "Now seems the language heard of Love as rain
> To make a mire where fruitfulness was meant.
> The golden harp gives out a jangled strain,
> Too like revolt from heaven's Omnipotent.
> But listen to the thought; so may there come
> Conception of a newly-added chord,
> Commanding space beyond where ear has home."

The conclusion is that the real danger to the family is not to be looked for in any of the things that are alleged, but in the moral paralysis that comes of the idea that the difficulties in the way of its maintenance and reconstruction are insuperable. The cure for this is for each man to realise for himself, in the first place, how much society depends for the strength of its tissue on the health and strength of the cells that compose it, and especially of that primeval cell we call the family; and, secondly, how much each can contribute to this health by the intelligent appreciation of what the new circumstances demand of him as a partner in the life of such a group.



Yet here, too, there is a danger of cant. After all, the family was made for man, not man for the family. It is only one of the forms, though a very fundamental one, in which man expresses his spiritual life. In this respect, it is to him what the material is to the artist,—a medium wherein he embodies his ideal of what life should be. If it should ever cease to be a fit medium for that purpose, the time will have come for its destruction. I have argued that there is, as yet, no appearance of such a time. Alteration and adaptation, it will, of course, require from time to time. In seeking to effect this alteration, the chief precaution is to make sure that we do so in the interest of a higher and not of a lower ideal,—that it is the human will in its effort after fuller self-expression, and not mere individual caprice, that finds itself hampered by its present form.

WOMEN AS CITIZENS

ZONA VALLANCE

I

THERE is a passage in *Fors Clavigera* in which Ruskin elaborates the conception of "Justice" underlying Giotto's picture in the chapel of the Arena, at Padua, and contrasts it with the blindfolded goddess, whose sole occupation is the measurement of rewards and punishments in unfeeling mechanical scales. Ruskin points out the superiority of the Christian painter's ideal, which rejects all such mechanical tests, and feels with sensitive human hands the measures of culpability or merit, and makes its awards with wide-open eyes, fully regardful of consequences, and observant, not merely of shares, but of human beings.

When I contemplate the present strifes in the Woman Movement and in the Labour Movement, this comparison of his always recurs to my mind. For nothing is more striking in these movements than the existence in both of two sets of advocates, one of which, at least on the surface, seems to take for granted that the popular Roman goddess gives a complete account of justice, while the other inclines—if often in a very stumbling fashion—to worship at the shrine of Giotto's saint.

Any person who has been in friendly touch with working-class idealists, or "agitators," whichever we may choose to call them, will have noticed how often rigid equality between social shares, and even mere *uniformity* of opportunity, seem in their orations to be implied as the beginning, middle, and aim of their propaganda. They sometimes speak as though they had no conscious need in their own minds for inquiry into questions of total and permanent social gain or loss, resulting



from any mere blind uniformity in methods of social award. They seem to omit all question as to any ultimate criterion of desert, in fact, as to the standard for the iron weights and their relation to the goods which shall be weighed in the balance, poised in the hands of their goddess.

On the other hand, the rank and file of wage-earners, while unable to fill in, or even to criticise, the gaps in this gospel of justice, seem to detect crudity and inconsistency in many of the public appeals for equality; and so they either hold aloof from active participation in the Labour Movement, or they content themselves with supporting here and there a particular measure, or a particular trade union, while refraining from adhesion to general social principles of any sort. They, too, worship justice perhaps; but they perceive that justice is more than an affair of measuring out equal shares without any respect of persons. They await that convincing statement of ethical principle, that "profounder view of life" mentioned in the Zürich Manifesto of the International Ethical Congress held in 1896. Thinkers among them must formulate this before the labour agitation can be consistent and strong.

Exactly the same need is apparent in the Woman Movement. Here, also, are two sorts of justice-worshippers. One party, in its frequent demands that justice should be entirely blind to all differences of sex, seems to bow before the Roman goddess; and the other section, somewhat half-consciously as yet, turns its eyes inquiringly towards Giotto's shrine. Neither section is, of course, consistent in its policy; but, at all events in industrial questions, there is a clear cleavage between those who would sweep off our statute-book every recognition of womanhood as a basis of law, and those who insist simply that, just because a woman is not man, such recognitions are needed; but that they must be one-sided, and therefore unfair, until both sexes co-operate in dealing with each problem as it arises.

It appears to me that in the Woman Movement, as in the Labour Movement, no unity is possible, no great achievement can be anticipated, no progress can be permanent, until its advocates come to some conscious conclusion as to the question

raised by Ruskin of the relation which discrimination bears to justice. It seems, also, that until the ethical question of the real meaning of the claims for equality is clearly answered, upholders of present class and sex privilege will continue to possess in the eyes of many persons a powerful argumentative weapon, when they advance the undoubted fact that neither the two sexes, nor any two men or women, are alike either in abilities or in needs.

What have ethical democrats to reply to such arguments? First, that we approach facts of sex and individual inequalities, not as nature worshippers, but as inquirers, critics, and reformers. The very existence of the agitations on behalf of wage-earners and of women is a proof of need for reforms—a proof that there are some inequalities not suited to the nature of those who are their subject. But there is no proof, and, therefore, no assertion on the part of serious thinkers, that inequalities can be abolished.

Occasionally democrats, even those who pose as students of history and of evolutionary science, give a handle to upholders of the present order by taking for granted that it is possible fully to equalise opportunities, and asserting that this mere equalisation is the whole purpose of democracy both in regard to sex and class. Such writers and speakers harm their cause whenever they omit to ask whether the persons whom they address make any mental distinction between equality and uniformity, or between the many meanings given to these words, "equality" and "equalise."

Forgetfulness of the gulf between uniformity and equality, and of the various senses in which we can speak of equality, makes some persons argue that whatever is a duty for a man is a duty for a woman, and that wherever a man needs no privilege neither does a woman; and that the doctrine contradictory to chivalry, is the true basis for the policy of the Woman's Rights Movement. It is a similar confusion that makes some enthusiasts recommend an eight-hour day, not merely as the maximum for compulsory toil, but as an indiscriminate rule for any and every sort of work, whether with hand or brain, and argue, also, for absolute uniformity of earnings.

Giotto's Justice, with her sensitive hands and her keen



observation, makes no such confusions. Her discrimination is not only the full admission of existing facts of inequality, but is also the recognition that inequalities are a part of her own life. It is the different qualities of eye and brain and hand that at once constitute the *nature* of justice, and the social relations which necessitate her rule. Yet justice always presupposes some sort of relation to equality. What, then, is hidden behind the revolt from inequality, expressed alike in the Labour Movement and the Woman Movement and in the craving for democracy itself? In each case it is a protest against the present social principle—not invariably obeyed however—of annexing artificial privilege to natural privilege. The accidental or natural privileges of abilities resulting from birth in a certain capable family group, or as a boy instead of a girl, have hitherto been regarded as in themselves justification for the bestowal of further gifts of social opportunity—gifts which we may term artificial, in the sense that they are decreed by man's conscious arrangements. "To him that hath shall be given" has been the social fiat—a fiat which is defended by the assertion that this strengthening of the strong indirectly benefits the inferior or weaker members, through raising the whole standard of race-life. Now, history shows there is truth in such assertion; but unfortunately, there is also truth in the counter statement, that the benefit to the weak is so very indirect that the greater portion of humanity plays the part of mere spectator, or is actually exploited, both morally and materially, in order to raise this selected few.

Admitting, then, that this is our present experience, does it follow that we should attempt simply to equalise opportunities by awarding to the *least* naturally able all sorts of social privilege? No one supports such a folly; and yet the language of democrats often leads their opponents to argue as though they did. It is a third solution of the question of distribution of artificial privilege which is really meant when women plead for equal opportunities with men, or when agitators declaim in our parks against class privilege —namely, that neither innate abilities nor disabilities, in themselves, should be ground for gain or loss of social

opportunity; but that the amount of these, taken in conjunction with their probable social or unsocial use by the owner, should determine the award of artificial advantages.

The equality presupposed in the conception of justice is simply, after all, that equality of reference to social good—which, perhaps, is the real meaning of the old theological phrase, "All men are equal before God"; and Justice was truly represented by Giotto as needing every human sense—as being, indeed, living, breathing, palpitating flesh-and-blood Humanity (including womanhood), which constitutes *itself* the point of reference in all just judgment on men and things. And, if this purely human and natural conception of justice be accepted, discrimination will be seen to make the greater part of the work of justice; while the call for equal opportunities, whether of class or of sex, will be understood as a simple call for that machinery which will allow the greatest possible discrimination in directing into right channels the energies of individuals. The true social problem, both in regard to individuals of inferior natural gift and in regard to women, will be seen to be how to place them in such positions that they can make effective demand on the service of the possessors of natural advantages without at the same time lessening their own incentives to productive social effort.

The Labour Movement and the Woman Movement are so frequently associated together in economics, and in the minds of thinkers and reformers, that I have felt constrained to speak of both in seeking to discover the real significance of the cry for equal opportunities which the latter sets up. But at this point, if my readers are agreed with me that the real aim is simply individual good, social good, and better discrimination, rather than uniformity, I wish to point out that, though the two movements go on all-fours in their ultimate purpose, yet the stress on discrimination as the true method of justice has a far greater significance for the Woman Movement than for the Labour Movement. For men and women have to be discriminated in two directions, *neither* of which can be ignored in any just view of sex privileges, or of sex contribution to social welfare. Men and



women must be counted, and must count each other, both as human beings of superior or inferior ability and need, and also as sexual beings; and any view of the Woman Question which leaves out *either* factor in reference to either sex is faulty. It is the tendency, both in advocates and opponents of woman's emancipation, to overlook one or other of these factors, that hinders consensus of opinion in favour of emancipation; and it is the same tendency that frequently divides into two, and thus weakens, the would-be reformers. But all are alike supporting Giotto's conception of Justice as dependent on discrimination of differences, when they ask that woman's own testimony as to her needs and nature should be required in all legal and political transactions.

II

A successful attempt to estimate the commands of justice, and a successful attempt to establish any democracy which should be, even approximately, a tangible manifestation of Giotto's Justice, was impossible in the past; and it will still be impossible, until instruments exist for collecting and expressing woman's own knowledge of her own nature, and woman's own will regarding the affairs of the community. For whether they be considered in their distinctive relation to the race, or as individuals of superior or inferior ability, these affairs inevitably react upon women. What is known to-day as the Woman Movement is the more or less conscious effort of women to provide the appropriate instrument. When it attains real self-consciousness, there will be a fully constituted Woman's Party. But the purpose of this organisation will not be mere uniformity of conditions for the sexes, nor will it be the establishment of that "Woman's Era" for which foolish partisans hope and which enemies sometimes prophesy. Some such organisation, accompanied by full political rights for women, would simply complete what Mr Herbert Spencer describes as the "Regulating System" of the State, compared by him to the nerve system of the human body. It will not, any more than is the case with organisations like the Liberal, Conservative,

and Labour Parties, result in any exact gratification of the ambitions of the Party. For a process of checks and counter-checks, similar to that which applies to sensations transmitted by nerves from particular parts of the human body, applies to the interaction of organised interests in the body politic. It is the consequences of the interactions which determine the effective will of the community; so that, when the state is completely and democratically constituted, there will be neither man's nor woman's will prevailing over the other, yet both will be equally influential.

In the past, women have had no direct power, either as individuals of inferior or superior ability, or by right of motherhood and wifehood; and consequently, on both these grounds, in the states where the sovereignty of the people has been asserted most loudly, there has been no adequate conception of what it was, and consequently no adequate knowledge of what it commanded; for the sovereign is both and female.

The modern Woman Movement is due quite as much to the recognition of this fact by consistent men democrats, as it is to the discovery on the part of women that the old method of making themselves understood through the medium of individual men, attached to them by ties of nature, blood, and economic bonds, was becoming more and more inefficient. Convincing arguments for the equality of the sexes were long ago advanced by Condorcet, Mary Astell, William Thompson, Mary Wollstencraft, and J. Stuart Mill and his wife. But all these arguments, as well as those of the American Women's Rights Convention of 1848 and its enterprising leaders, would probably have remained mere abstract arguments, if they had not had the support of actual circumstances in the history of man. For man is a creature that grows; and at all times in his history applications of ideal rights and duties, for the very sake of ideal right, have to be related to existing conditions. But two facts of his growth are continually bringing home the inefficiency of men to represent and rule women, either individually or as a sex—a fact of the body and a fact of the mind.



III

In 1732 the Industrial Revolution* was begun. This is the material fact. In 1719 the first factory in the modern sense, Sir Thomas Lombes' "Throwing Mill," was established in England; and in 1732 the patent for its machinery ran out, and other factories began to be set up. By 1832 the climax of the Revolution was reached and "the first comprehensive scheme for legislation devised to modify some of its social results was on the point of being promulgated." The combination laws had been repealed in 1825, and about 1830, out of the various special trade societies the enlarged conception of Trades Unions had arisen.† The Reform Bill of 1867 enfranchised masses of working-men. Their Parliamentary victories in 1875 legalised ‡ "collective bargaining with all its necessary accompaniments." Thorough organisation became possible; and again in 1884-5 their voting power was increased. In fact,§ from about 1867 onwards, there has been a gradual adoption, by working-men, of political argument and pressure to advance their own economic interests. But the Reform Bill of 1832 together with the judicial decisions after the act of 1867 practically, if unconstitutionally, disfranchised the whole female sex at the very time when women of all classes were passing into an era in which their wealth-producing activities were no longer to be exerted in intimate comradeship with husbands, brothers, and fathers. The poorest and largest class slowly come under the control of male employers, unconnected with them by any personal link of affection or blood. The last relics of the ancient Feudal System, which had made the master of the women in a family the master of the men also, utterly passed away. Now, there is nothing to prevent husband, father, and brothers from serving employers who are waging the industrial warfare of economic competition against the very men who pay insufficient wages to the women folk. Working-class women are competing with

* "The Modern Factory System," pp. 2-8, R. Whately Cooke Taylor.
† "History of Trades Unionism," Webb, p. 102.
‡ *Ibid.* p. 275. § *Ibid.* chap. v.

men, and lowering their wages, because other men will not give women and men equal pay for equal work. Men wage-workers are using the legislature, sometimes unwittingly, sometimes wittingly, sometimes wisely, sometimes unwisely, to prevent, or to drive them from, employment. Great ladies are no longer captains of the home industries, which afforded them brain work and responsibilities in conjunction with their husbands. Middle-class women have acquired, through machinery, leisure for study, for social criticism, and for productive work, often balked of useful outlet; and universities and professional corporations, with which perhaps husbands and brothers are involved, are using ancient artificial privileges to withhold from educated women the fruits of their natural abilities and labour. When we add to all this the fact that women of every class are the principal purchasing agents of the community; that they are liable to be exploited through employers or shopkeepers, or unknowingly to exploit both male and female workers, who may sometimes be their kith and kin, it is hard to see the sense of withholding from them full responsibility; and it is clear that the economic and industrial interests of individual women can no longer even appear to be included in those of their male relatives. The migration from the home to the factory of what had been useful productive labours for women, carried on in each rank in more or less comradeship with male relatives, has changed the whole situation. There are rival theories concerning the part taken by women in the origin of civilisation and concerning the nature of causes for their restriction to household duties; but it is not necessary to choose between these in tracing our modern conditions; for all parties agree that, in former times, both the method and the purpose of organisation outside the home had been more or less military. It is acknowledged that the organisation of the State is inherited from men who had originally co-operated in order to economise aggressive and defensive forces for predatory incursions upon animals or upon other men. Peaceable industries were the only ones suited to women rearing families; and industry was not organised. There was thus at first little purely economic reason for their seeking to join the



men's militant organisation, which brought them materials to make up, and slave-workers to assist. Setting aside the backward countries and primitive times, in England, down to the seventeenth century,* free women not only possessed certain political privileges, but exercised them; and, so far as industry became organised, they did participate, for they had their own trade guilds, and were admitted to those of men. But civil war as a method of final arbitration for class interests did not cease until the seventeenth century, when Puritan theology for a time taught women to despise themselves; and there was no very active or wide-spread feminine discontent with domesticity, so long as men could only enforce order among themselves by a rigid separation into classes, or quasi-military ranks, knowing no effective method of finally elucidating their conflicting interests and those of their families except that of actual war. War between nations has not ceased; but civil war has; and in England the dueller and the highway robber are gone. Not only have the personal relationships of labour changed, and associated themselves in new ways with the production and consumption of wealth, but political organisation itself, in all its ramifications, legislative and executive, has gradually altered its essentially masculine character. Foreign policies, commercial treaties, factory legislation, and State education are continuously transforming it into an agency for the economy of peaceable occupations and energies. Women do not have to go to market, through muddy thickets, behind a male protector on horseback. Safe and rapid transport of men and things has procured them the ability to have commercial dealings of their own. As industrial and economic factors they are penetrating everywhere. Women, as nurses, led by Florence Nightingale, now participate in foreign wars. Military operations of the modern sort are based upon industries, in some of which women are paid workers; and all of which react upon their employments.

Through the labour movement, industry has not only established its right to organise, but has ranged itself along-

* See "British Freewomen," C. C. Stopes.

side of acquisitive ability as a politico-social factor. The method and the purpose of politics have appropriately altered. In lieu of the material battlefield, the human mind has become the arena where questions are decided. Ability in debate, which is not a matter of muscle, but depends upon knowledge of human needs and motives, and of economic and industrial circumstance, has ousted the mere wisdom of the sword; and the new wisdom is no wisdom, unless it be intimate and accurate. It already relates to spinning, sewing, and weaving, to teaching and even to feeding of children, to caring for the aged and the poor, and even to shopping at right hours; and it also decides issues of life, death, and disease, for mothers and infants, due to various forms of factory labour, or the omissions of employers. If women's interests are men's, then, in men's defence, women must have every facility from them to give their own best testimony freely in all the branches of government. Even taken alone, all this material change necessitates equal political opportunity for women and men, and the party organisation of women.

But there is also a second fact, a fact of mental development, which makes the need of emancipation for women so urgent to many reformers.

Civilisation has given a new significance and dignity to every duty and every feeling that belongs to the conjugal and parental relations. It has done this subjectively and objectively, through the emotions of individuals, and through the practical applications science has been making of the Hebrew generalisation that the sins of the fathers are visited on the children. Both these causes have awakened attention to the fact that the voluntary and the involuntary energies in women have equal sociological import. But while we are ready to admit that in the present and in the future the conscious purposes of women will be social factors, in regard to the past history of the race it has become fashionable to assume that men must take sole responsibility. This reading of history is not only crude, but is also pernicious, because it makes a breach between the aspirations of the women of to-day and those of the women of the past, who so quietly accepted the family as their abiding place.



Milton is reprobated by moderns for saying that God created man the Providence of woman; yet the same doctrine is not thought foolish when it is read into history, when nature is substituted for God, and when the theological tradition of Eve's original sin is reversed, by crediting Father Adam with an invincible power and propensity to use the economic needs of motherhood with such ghastly purpose and effect, as to utterly destroy all independent characteristics in Eve, and remodel her into a flabby passive substance for the operation of his single will. Strangely enough, though men seem first to have invented the theory of the creator vampire and the puppet victim, as they did the story of Eve and the apple, women who believe their sex can achieve emancipation from men are ready to give it credence, without noticing that such unnatural past relations of the sexes, far beneath those among the lower animals, would have left not one rift, either in manhood or in womanhood, through which progress could have crept to women. Even respectable sociologists tacitly assume this scanty doctrine of cause and effect for the position of women in the past; for they never point out that behind the despair-breeding account lies that poor exploded ghost, the economic man, who is said to live with his eyes bound to his stomach. The truth is both sexes have made history, good and bad. But the earlier we go in time, the less can we get any chronicle of anything but outward customs, and the sensational doings of the most conspicuous and restless social elements; nevertheless, there are always quiet and permanent forces at work which are merely overlooked because they are so permanent. Need for food is not the only one. Nor is a conjunction of force with lust, and of feminine disabilities with fear and self-calculation, all that we find in animals and in savages of to-day. If man had strength, woman had priority of time and of affection in the education of every living human creature. Yet she made, and still makes, scarce an effort to use these advantages in defence of feminine interests. For she does not, and did not, see why these natural advantages, and her interests as apart from man, are important. Even in the present day each civilised mother begins the inequality of the sexes anew

in the privacy of the nursery. In the past, the value of the male sex to herself, as warriors and hunters, may have had much to do with it; but there was another cause also inherent in woman's own nature. The disposition to assume unrequited service as part and parcel of womanhood is logically and physiologically consequent upon her maternal offices. It has a psychology which starts from her own origins, gotten and given, no less than has the man's propensity to overbear. There is no psychological need whatever to predicate a terrific subjugation of woman to personal service. Eve was a voluntary as well as an involuntary agent in the past; but, like Adam, she acted and suffered from an entire ignorance of the ultimate results of blind obedience to a mere instinct. She saw no fallacy in the very crude assumption that when a thing is good up to a certain point, twice as much of it is better.

This womanly disposition towards unrequited service, which must exist in maternity, was the original accumulator for progress. It permitted, and it resulted from, that slow development of the human child, which has at length produced a race divided from beast-hood by a great gulf. It has been, and still is, one of the chief constituents in social history. But it remains a fount for progress only in proportion as it has been conveyed to men, and variously, even when inadequately, displayed by them in the tussle with the sub-human world in and around man. The complementary nature of man and woman is shown in exchange and combination of ideals, not in the setting up of two ideals side by side. But precisely for this reason the Woman Movement would fail, if in its efforts to borrow the enthusiasms and methods of men, it cut itself mentally adrift from that primitive instinct.

There are many logical consequences of womanhood, which, from a feminine point of view, should have positive practical expression in the make-up of society and in its life; but whilst men may claim that in the past they did in some degree forward those needs and energies of the woman which they shared with her, the positive side of her being, as wife and mother, was hardly noticed. In legislation the rights of womanhood as against manhood have been nowhere, and maternal



contributions to the welfare of states have been absolutely unacknowledged. The things which differentiated women from men have been unrepresented. Men never could represent them. Militarism hid them away out of sight, and even associated more or less shame with all offices which were exclusively women's. But this shallow militarism was after all itself a short-sighted over-emphasis of the material interests immediately common to both sexes; and the imposition of tutelage upon women was due not only to masculine lust for power and possession, but also to ignorance of what the race owed to women as women. Contrary to modern science,* man was supposed by the ancients to be the sole generator of the race, woman having only the subordinate part of nourisher to his progeny. Plato's "Republic" was therefore particularly generous in counting her as another edition of manhood, merely weakened by maternity for all occupations conducted by citizens. But, be it observed, such a view still leaves her essentially inferior. Socially, Plato places motherhood simply in the light of an obstacle to be circumvented by convenient arrangements. With all his allegiance to fact and reason, he does not seem to reflect that physical distinctions in women, like the similarities he emphasises, must have positive psychological consequences in addition to negative ones. As it is, with all his radicalism, women, as women, are of no organic importance to his state; and he seems to have given the cue to all succeeding advocates of women's rights. Up till the most recent times, their claims have continued to be based chiefly, if not entirely, on the similarities betwen men and women.

But the relations of wifehood and motherhood have for centuries been quietly developing in psychological, and therefore in social, significance. Professor Karl Pearson, in his "Ethics of Freethought,"† points out that, in spite of the licence of the age of chivalry, it bequeathed to the world a new idealism in marriage and love. Since then poetry and modern fiction have focussed events in isolated homes, and displayed the relation between the family affections and the illimitable

* Lecky's "European Morals," vol. ii. p. 472 and note.

† P. 419.

and less personal love which theologians have named God. Comte was the first to point out that the influence of woman upon man was a dynamical factor in society. He indeed set the mission of woman, simply as man's companion, on a supreme pinnacle. It is true he limited the companionship to private life. But he insisted on the intrinsic power of love itself to consecrate and subordinate all mere personal gratifications to the general good; and it is the attainment of this power, and its practice, which was, and is, the great essential to comradeship between men and women in public affairs. Consistently with his dynamical view of womanhood, he departed from the ancients by also investing motherhood with a distinctive spiritual and moral, as well as a corporeal, duty and efficacy; and the poetic exaltation of the Virgin Mary, as a religious medium and the Mother of God, which characterised the Middle Ages, shows that in this he was not merely inventing or prophesying, but was really voicing a human experience which had previously clothed itself in religious imagery. The detailed recommendations of Comte are obsolete. His notion of the means by which women were to be kept womanly, yet able to quicken society with their spirit, is utterly belied by actual experience; and he takes no count of the economic contributions to social welfare which women can make. Yet he did valuable service in accentuating the fact that no conception of society is organic unless it sets up womanhood as an end.

IV

Giotto, following the practice of all artists, painted Justice as a woman, and Giotto was right; for, if once woman were freed from restrictions foreign to her own being, in virtue of maternity she would have a larger range of experience than man. This width of nature makes her quicker to participate in every variety of human feeling. It constitutes her a natural distributor; but perhaps it tends to hinder that concentration of energy on the understanding and conquest of inanimate nature, in which man has shown characteristic ability. Fullest play for the tendencies to distribute and to concentrate are



required for a perfect community; and our revised conception of democracy must regard both womanhood and manhood as ends, as well as every individual person in the community. Our sense of the need for improved distribution has made us cease to trust in the compartment views of life which issued in the caste systems of India, the class systems of Europe, and the sex spheres. We have assimilated the fact which Comte forgot, and which Mr Herbert Spencer emphasises, that, though Society be an organism, it is unlike an animal body in being discrete rather than concrete. This implies in ethics that one of the ideal conditions in a true democracy is freedom for each unit to discriminate his or her own best service, and freedom to use any organ of the body politic most suitable for its performance. Comte tacitly assumed that women have some secret well-spring, somewhere above the world of affairs, from which to draw strength of moral purpose and moral intuitions; but the affairs themselves are the well-spring. There is no knowledge apart from doing. There is no sense of responsibility where there is no power. The democratic machine has to be so arranged that it can perform similar offices to those assigned in the article of this volume, "Literature and Life," to science and literature. Mr. Collin has shown that Science and Literature are a harmonious art, at once extending and widening, yet foreshortening into "shareable visions" all the vivid contrasts of the unbounded universe. Ethical democracy should enable each person, male and female, to absorb the varied and conflicting social experience of the race. The state has long acknowledged and used general ideas, such as man and woman, various occupations, political parties, and their inter-connections; but yet its apparatus for the distributive process in regard to material and mental wealth has always been defective. Regulated by men only, it has not succeeded in bringing home and making real to separate persons the impersonal realm it seeks to absorb. This should be the woman's chief dynamical contribution, but it will be balked so long as the compartment system is inflexible.

But can women, and will they, make the right sort of dynamical contribution? Not if they ignore their womanhood.

I have pointed out that the trend of development is to manifest the educational and positive value of all that differentiates woman from man and attaches them together. To quote again from "Literature and Life," "Love to the death" is making itself felt as part of the dynamics of the state. But on this very account, it is worse than useless to deny the negative results of feminine activities. Both the positive and the negative results are reasons why the emancipation of women must be established by discrimination. A simple illustration will show how absurd is the prevalent cry for mere uniformity. Imagine a man and a woman of precisely equal abilities for a given social achievement, for which a prize or examination test were offered, on condition that each became the parent of three or four children. We know beforehand which would win; for obviously we have given the woman not only a larger task, but a task which is different inwardly and outwardly from the man's. I have already pointed out that the natural woman possesses a wider range of possible services and possible experiences than men have. But if, within this range, she is to select and give the very best of herself to the community, she must have special social and economic conditions. Hitherto, an outside necessity, the pressure of the state, which was inflexible to woman's control, has established and regulated the synthesis of her nature and activities. Under democracy, it must be established afresh, and regulated from within herself. To enable individual women to do this with the least possible sacrifice of personality, and the greatest possible benefit to the community, besides uniting with men in public life, women must thoroughly organise a party of their own on the basis of motherhood; and sex legislation with a view to economic recognition of motherhood must be one of its chief aims.

By ones and twos and threes, women, educated and uneducated, are pressing into the life of the state. Some are moved solely by personal considerations and enthusiasms, good, bad, and indifferent. Some are under the influence of good men, their coadjutors in churches or societies, or their relatives. Some are, or are becoming, tools of bad or ignorant men. This is not the place or the occasion to give detailed illustra-



tion. But these isolated women will easily endanger the cause of all women, and of democracy. In Egypt, in Greece, and in Rome, the proceedings of isolated women, who, by mixed means, attained positions of power, economical or political, produced combinations of the best and the worst men in favour of reactionary measures against women in general. Ignorance of the seamy side of business and politics, and lack of a social standard of self-criticism, are the natural consequences of their isolation. Besides this, there is waste and friction everywhere, from the war that is going on between woman in her special relation to the race, and woman as ordinary human being. It displays itself in a few educated women in acceptance of the free love gospel originated by Utopian men, although nothing is more clear than that individualistic views of marriage led in former times to the tutelage of women. But, for the most part, it is shown in feminine resentment against any and every form of sex legislation. Miss G. Hill, in her book, "Women in English Life,"* says there are fourteen or fifteen thousand factory women in England and Wales. They often pay all they earn to caretakers, who look after house and child; but they go to the factory because the conditions that make home-life worth having are absent, and they prefer excitement and numbers, even with the hard work and long hours of the factory. Yet she does not urge a cure in the improvement of these home conditions. Nor does she discuss the welfare of the child; but she sums up against all sex legislation on the ground that women want more liberty, and are better judges of their own needs than their self-constituted judges. On the other hand, the Misses Bulley and Whitley, authoresses of "Women's Work," seem almost to favour prohibition of the employment in factories of mothers of young children. One of their chapters† says, "It may sometimes be the means of adding to the family income, but cases have come under my notice in which the weekly payments made for looking after the home and children, and the extra expenses involved in mending, washing, and in the preparation of food, outweigh the gain in wages."

* Pp. 203 and 207.

† P. 104.

They then furnish statistics and extracts from medical evidence given before the Labour Commission, exhibiting loss of life and health, and the physical deterioration of the children of factory-workers. No person who attended the labour sections of the recent Woman's International Congress, or who has examined the policies of such bodies as the "Women's Industrial Council," and the "Society for the Employment of Women, with its Committee for Defence of the Freedom of Labour," can fail to be impressed by the division of opinion on this subject among educated women; and underlying it is more than a mere question of economics. It may seem that this breach could be healed if more facts were to hand by which to estimate the exact economical and physical results of this factory labour to the mothers and children concerned; and such an inquiry is to be undertaken by the "Women's Industrial Council" and other organisations. But those who look at the woman question ethically, must feel that physical and economical facts alone can never determine a mother's duty, or yet unify the policy of the Woman Party. The fundamental question is the ultimate effect on the whole community through the psychological result to the women and children involved. The only source of unity for the advanced women, whether considered as single souls, or collectively, is a deeper and more discriminating awareness of the precise significance of womanhood itself as a social factor. But just now there is undoubtedly a tacit shirking of debate on this point; and it must be confessed that there is historic ground for the suspicion and dread which many women exhibit when generalisations concerning the whole sex are advanced as basis for action. But they have to face the fact that in practice generalisation will occur.

The Woman Movement has necessarily been initiated by strong personalities, who sought at first only an outlet for energies they shared with men. The most logical and effective method of quickening the sense of justice in men was therefore, at the immediate moment, an appeal to the similarities of the sexes, and a battle against sex generalisation. These women are still perhaps the ascendant section in the party, and their efforts have given it the name of the Woman's Rights



Party. This cry of Rights is apt to connote to undiscriminating persons mere sex-bias and aggressive disposition. But women had to borrow the word of the state in claiming to enter it as a factor. And so long as the business of the state is (as is the case under the sole influence of men), largely, a simple combat between minorities of the citizens for the possession of authority in its two aspects of place and money, the licence women ask will have to be a licence to fight. Moreover, rights are seldom heard of, except where some one is wronged; and whilst women and large sections of men are treated as appendages instead of as integral parts of the political and economic community, the word will be psychologically as well as politically appropriate as a revolutionary incitement. But, for all that, women's aggressiveness towards men is only borrowed from the performances of men. Individually, they may often be shrews; but in masses, and in the long run, nature itself denies them the inclination towards sex bias. For although it is often affirmed that the interests of women are included in those of men, the facts incline the contrary way, seeing that every man who enters the world must be part of a woman's life for a considerable period. If once the mechanism of democracy were completed, the word rights would give place to the family word "duty"; and the stress would be laid upon womanhood. But the "rights" now involved are not simply public. Women are claiming the right to reconstruct family life with a view to their own financial independence. It is here that, without thorough organisation, they may easily shipwreck both their immediate cause and democracy itself. For there are two policies, one permanently combative, and merely imitative of existing men, the other based upon woman's intrinsic distinctions, and claiming the whole fruit of progress simply in order to build further progress upon them. They may seek monetary independence, accompanied by the curtailment of motherhood, or by the conscious development of motherhood. They can carry family ideals with them into the state, or they can open the family door and let in the militant spirit. The mother can resolve to give only the precise pound of flesh that nature exacts of her to her children, or she can lavish on them all the soul which she

feeds and strengthens by public activities. If the pecuniary independence of all women can be achieved only by specialisation of all women to occupations outside the family in a competitive community, it would be preferable to keep Mr Herbert Spencer's compartment division of the family from the state which specialises all women to persons. What is needed is that women should wrestle among themselves until they achieve consciousness of their sociological mission and of the means to fulfil it. Democracy is not merely the sovereignty of all the people, including all the women; and the sovereignty of the people is not merely the *voice* of God. It is the life of God. A true democracy is a theocracy. It is not a mechanical state of equilibrium. It is a process by which each shares the life of all, that he may create more life. Women must enter the life of the state to assist in its reconstruction—to make a dynamical contribution intelligently based on their womanhood. Is it doubted that they can do this? Can any physiological characteristic peculiar to one man or woman fail to influence him or her psychologically? Can any events in the past of a family or race fail to affect them intellectually and morally? Does not each nation acquire the sense of a patriotic mission through its physical geography and its history, internal and external? Women have scarcely begun to analyse their own nature. When they do so systematically, and in masses, it will be seen that there is in them no failure of the ordinary laws of cause and effect. What is needed is that all their circumstances and duties shall be intelligently considered and connected together; that feelings now creating morbid waste, through isolation, shall, by friction with each other, evolve purpose related to society. At present, political women are ready to put aside differences of theological creed, and differences even of political creed, in order to attain the right for any and every sort of woman to participate in politics; but to ethicise the aims of all sorts and conditions of women has not been avowed as a part of their politics. This is because they have not realised how fatal it would be if women in large numbers made a travesty of democracy, through substituting the idea of rights unrelated to the community for duties. The principle that men are ends in themselves is



easily travestied by men, and is dangerous enough when the beast gets the upper hand. But if women do not constantly remind themselves that it is a woman who is the end, the danger to the community is much greater because a larger sphere of life is tainted. The rights of the individual women must be conserved, yet continue to be related to the duties of all women. It is sometimes contended that the word Right is philosophically only the other side of the word Duty. But whatever it be philosophically, psychologically this is not the case. The word Right is individualistic, and arises from a militant type of society. It conspires, whilst the word duty inspires. Duty is the new woman's word, because it is the word of construction. Our Rights narrow our gaze to the ego in which they centre. Our duties widen the conception of that ego, until life itself grows rich and fruitful. The ego needs attention. It is the microcosm, the axle of the wheel on the car of progress. The rim of that wheel is our vision of the macrocosm. The spokes are our activities. Where they fit the rim our duties lie. But the imaginative circle compassed by the word Duty is as much larger than that called up by the word Right, as are the spaces between the spokes at the rim larger than those at the axle. Both the physical needs of the race and the age-long control of men have given women Duty as their watchword. They feel they have accepted much evil at men's hands; let them cling to their good gifts. Let them form a Woman's Party to keep among themselves the watchword Duty, but to enlarge its meaning. Woman's conceptions of duty have been confined to the small sphere of the home, because the conjugal tie has been allowed to hinder the social development of the maternal instinct which, historically, is the very well-spring of duty enlarging self in the race. Women must seek a principle of cohesion amongst themselves, and with the state, in a thought-out conception of womanhood, adjusted to the conditions of modern life. They must resolutely come together to educate each other for the purpose of realising socially and politically this conception. They must draw out what is most useful in individuals; and they must give their best individuals special needful facilities to take a prominent part in affairs.

Only long and careful consideration and comparison of the life and aspirations of women of all sorts will enable Woman to establish conditions suited to the realisation of her full self. But some principles of comparison, well debated by women among themselves, must be adopted at the outset.

V

It may not be unprofitable, however, for one woman to suggest what these should be, and to apply them to the two rival theories of the means by which women are to be effective influences in society. Comte, Ruskin, Spencer, and most modern thinkers insist that women owe special dynamical contributions, consequent upon their nature, other than mere bodily service, to the community; but they hold that these can only be given through dependence upon individual men, and through specialisation towards persons rather than towards occupations. Setting aside extraordinary women for extraordinary times, Comte proposed social companionship with men, in the home first, in the salon after, as the prime medium of woman's influence. Though he exalted motherhood as an educational agency, he made it wholly secondary to the relation of the woman to the man. If the woman is dependent on the father of her child, and is not an integral part of the state in which her sons are to participate, Comte was in this thoroughly consistent.

His view aimed at being psychological. But opposed to it we have to-day the new economical view, the yearning for the remodelling of women's aims and their family life to match modern methods of industry. The proposal and its grounds have been strikingly presented by Mrs C. P. Stetson, in "Women and Economics." She advocates that all women, including mothers, should specialise towards occupations for which they are to receive payment as men do. Women are to economise feminine energies in the same way that men have economised masculine ones. There are to be common, instead of family meals, and organised co-operation in the rearing of infants by those who specialise for the purpose; and



from this she foresees intellectual and moral redemption for women, and also increased maternal efficiency.

What are our principles of comparison? We must try these views, and select and reconcile what is good in each, by the standard adopted at the beginning, the social good. But at all stages of evolution the social good itself contains two criterions by which to regulate woman's life. It must be determined, as Comte saw, by the genius of women; but also by the nature of the present deficiencies in the functioning of the social organism; and the progress of women consists in their own power to relate these two things. I cannot believe that either persons or groups of persons, unless when the social need is so great as to become paramount, should be pressed into performances that create waste of energy within themselves by splitting emotions proper to the nature from the main activities of their lives. Social economy forbids this. But, on the other hand, personal lives can never continue whole if they are not constantly, consciously, and freely adjusted to the march of social needs, carefully observed and estimated by themselves.

Progress has its root in this sort of individual initiative, and Comte's dogmatic hierarchy falls short by leaving little or no room for progress, either in women, or through women. On the other hand, Mrs Stetson proposes an enlargement of women's lives which is unrelated to the visible diseases of the state, and which ignores what I might call the psychological principle of parsimony formulated above. Public *crêches* managed by trained women, and public food agencies, so far as applicable, would certainly benefit both women and babies. But they are represented not merely as universally adaptable to all the conflicting circumstances of town and of lonely country avocations, but, as though, accompanied by the cash nexus for the woman's occupations, they would heal the inner conflict now rampant between woman's nature as wife and mother and her ordinary human aspirations. No reconstruction of the family only can do this. There must be an ethical healing of the breach stretching wide into the state. Undoubtedly there are some women, capable of a larger life task than many men, for whom such customs would smooth



perplexities and facilitate pre-eminence in special occupations. This is good. But if the mere sense of achievement in the same direction as that of man is to be woman's principal aim, motherhood would be penalised. The precise mode is a debatable point; but the State must legally recognise motherhood as a productive service. For not even the rearrangement of the entire state can alter nature's decree that mothers should give for at least two years bodily nourishment to every human being who enters life, at the identical period when they and the men are at the zenith of their powers. No matter how maternal energies are economised by organisation, the whole of women will have less time and vitality than the whole of men for public careers, whether of industry or of state craft. Specialisation to persons is, in fact, partly compulsory. But nature herself has attached to this specialisation, priority of opportunity, of motive, and of motor power to mould human character, priority which women have never yet been competent to utilise. Home education is the mother's make-weight. It is the activity which, if intelligently and consciously developed, would compensate for the physical advantages of manhood and necessitate public consideration for woman's personality. Mrs Stetson's attack upon motherhood as it is, is most forcible and just; and she is right in recommending the co-operation of all women for the reform of mothers. But co-operation for efficient motherhood is one thing; co-operation to set mothers free for specialisation to paying careers, regarded as all-important because they are industrial and impersonal, is quite another. Already, what we have to combat is dissociation of the bodily services of motherhood from the educational and spiritual ones. To widen this dissociation would ultimately strike a blow at the unseen foundations of society. We need to protest against one of the prevalent crudities of the day—the contempt for personal service and personal servants. Mrs Stetson says:* "Work, the object of which is merely to serve one's self, is the lowest. Work, the object of which is merely to serve one's family, is the next lowest. Work, the object of which is to serve more and more people, in widening range, till it ap-

* "Women and Economics," p. 279.



proaches the divine spirit that cares for all the world, is social service in the fullest sense, and the highest form of service that we can reach." At first this sounds like a good argument against maternal specialisation to persons; but the "merely" in each instance begs the whole question. An ethical democracy cannot exist without personal as well as impersonal service; the two are really inseparable in ethical thought. We have yet to harmonise them in fact. This is the problem Democracy must solve. The real crime of motherhood has been, not its individualisation, but its acquiescence in the substitution of bodily for spiritual service.

Democracy can only be maintained by a community of individuals who possess not merely impartiality, but also strong and deep affections, powerful enough to engender the self-denial that creates progress. Any sound construction of society must recognise that the psychic life of the state is correlative to that of the individuals. The intensity of feeling that acts as a spur to the extraordinary effort which begets progress, may be pleasurable or painful. Suffering produced the French Revolution. Our criticism against the present anarchy of the competitive system of industry is, that the motor feeling which drives so many of the workers is pain, is fear rather than love. Our problem is to substitute love as driving force. But to do this, we must maintain home conditions which will really nurse the kind of nature that craves and experiences passionate love. Surely those are right who say that the personal devotion of motherhood is not merely a physical need of infancy, but is truly a socio-psychological need. Even the exclusiveness of motherhood, which puts affection for the particular offspring before everything in the world, at least so long as the mother has something to give which the offspring needs, is a quickening agency, the effects of which are far-reaching, good, and permanent. Moreover, there are other important benefits of maternal specialisation. The great distinction between the rearing of children and animals is the discrimination needed to draw out promising elements of their characters and repress mischievous tendencies. Fewness of children, continuity of observation, variety of sex and age, natural occasions for the



manifestation of disposition—all these conditions, and more, are needed, and could be supplied by separated families, with leisured mothers possessing, through affection, sympathetic ability and inclination to study the individualities. Women altogether specialised for attendance upon infants and very young children would have to be nearly as numerous as the mothers; and they would not then be substitutes; for even school teaching, if pursued during a whole life as an exclusive vocation, tends to dwarf all but the finest natures. It is exactly when the mother is tied down throughout her life to attendance upon children that she is most inefficient to supplement the school teaching. Yet, whatever the method of earning a living prior to maternity, women must be economically free, during maternity, to subordinate it entirely to the educational and bodily needs of the offspring. Leisure from an industrial career is needed by the mother for precisely the same reasons as it is needed by the statesman. This is what was recognised by Comte. Yet, in leaving women economically dependent upon the very men who already possessed the enormous influences of love and common parenthood, he ensnared them in temptations (well described by Mrs Stetson) to put the lower self far above the interests of childhood; and in locking them in the home from infancy to old age, he denied them the first requisites of educators, maturity of character, and opportunity to regulate their teaching by common experiences of life. Whether as educator of children or of men, he credited woman with the power to make bricks without straw. Mary Wollstencraft saw deeper into woman's nature and into the sources of morality, when she pleaded that every woman and even every child (in the day school) needs a public as well as a private life. Woman needs the public duty; but not the greedy strain of economic warfare.

But there are natural causes why the entry of women into public life may hasten the moralisation of the whole community. A frequent argument against their admission, seldom clearly stated or properly answered, is that they cannot become dynamical factors in the state, because physical force is the ultimate basis of authority, and it resides in the male. This argument is often formulated so as to imply that might is sup-



posed to be itself the origin of right. But the contention, as put forward by the best intellects, is really one of expediency. It is well explained by Mr Goldwin Smith,* who fears that because might is the means used to enforce right, therefore the mightiest sex would create disorder in the state, if asked to obey the weaker one, even if it happened to be in the right. The answer is, however, unconsciously supplied by himself. A government which arbitrates only by muscle, has already ceased to be a government and become an "anarchy." Physical force is then self-destructive. The knowledge of this is civilisation. Not only is right master of might, as he admits, but it is the hidden secret *in* it. Permanent might is only concocted *out* of right. For men and for women to know the nature of right is to possess might and government. But this argument and its answer has great significance for political women. Whatever some of them may say, woman's history bears out the statement that physical force resides in the male. Woman's might is only safe-guarded and won by education. In the end this is her might. Participation in affairs is her best means, both for self-education and for exercising the right influence on the character of men. But this very participation will cease to be educational if she omits to centralise her thought on the ethical aim and her own nature. In any partnership there is a sense in which it is true that justice is the interest of the weaker partner. This is why women instinctively care more for the goodness of public men than for their programmes. In this they are logical and far-feeling. The folly of the common preference for programmes and for merely political skill, over real all-round integrity of character, is amply demonstrated by the frequent and discouraging victories of public corruption over democratic aspirations. Owing to the segregation of families, the personal character of public men affects the imagination of other men less obviously and instantaneously than it does women. Some kinds of vice, those which taint the sources of parenthood, are even set apart as having no connection with public life, simply because they only hurt men through women. But they are the very ones that most keep women out of public life;

* "Questions of the Day," pp. 203, 204.



and women are more than half the Community. Their presence on public bodies will demonstrate that no sort of vice is merely private. All this shows, however, that women need something more than a merely imitative view of themselves and of the state. In entering its life they have to guard their own power to remain there, and also to accomplish a synthesis of their own varied being. The distinctive features of woman in the little family must also be able to be her distinctive characteristics in her dealings with the greater human family. She must go into public affairs, not for any absolute rule in a new Matriarchate; but yet to maternalise public life. Mrs Stetson thinks men have already done this, but it is really the exact thing they have failed to do.

Mr Herbert Spencer anticipates mischief if women were to exercise political power, just on account of maternal proclivities. He is untrue to his organic conception of the state in his compartment views of life, and of ethics between women and their children. He holds that the salvation of every society* "depends on the maintenance of an absolute opposition between the *régime* of the family and the *régime* of the state." But he bases this opinion on a highly fallacious account of human practice and human ethics in them both. Speaking of the family he describes the period of immaturity as a period when "each member must receive benefits in proportion to its incapacity."* He then, for this non-moral expression "incapacity," swiftly substitutes the moral expression "least worthy";* and contrasts it with the moral term "merit," which he ascribes to persons who get most benefit under the law for the mature (the state law). Which is Mr Spencer going to talk about? If he is talking of actual practice, there is no such thing in the state which we see to-day as this ethical apportionment between gain and merit. But if it is the ethical ideal of the state to which he alludes, then why does he compare it with the kind of parenthood which characterises the lower animals, and which, in so bald a form, hardly exists even in the most primitive and unintelligent women, who, unlike animals, must retain children of all ages in their care? It is the ethical ideal of the civilised mother he should take. It would be a strange one that gave

* "Principles of Sociology," vol. i. pp. 707-8, and 758.



benefits because merit was small. Benefits are, on the contrary, distributed by the mother in relation to growth; and there is nice discrimination in quality as well as in quantity. There is no means of ascertaining the merit of the infant, and so she impartially gives it much service, according to its animal needs; but the quality of the benefit she gives the older child is higher than that the infant receives, and will improve with its age, strength, and power to assimilate and demand deeper and more intelligent foresight. Ideal motherhood means service discriminated, not according to the gain of the server, which is at present the almost entire practice in the state, apart from family relations; but discriminated according to the need of recipients, gauged by a standard of development towards adult usefulness. Personal service, with a constant reference to moral and material progress, this is the ethical effort (despite shortcomings in practice) of every fully self-conscious mother.

It is here that we reach the point of actual relation between motherhood and its activities, and the need of the modern state. It is precisely this kind of distributive discrimination which is lacking in the social system. The best women are filled with contrition for the shortcomings of motherhood. But the best men are just as repentant for their handiwork in the state. Ever since the time of Robert Owen, thinking men in our own country have been engaged in a systematic criticism of their own industrial and economic structure. Women accuse their limitation to personal services. Men blame their impersonal "System." But the strangest thing of all is that the criticism addressed to woman at present, and accepted by her, is always, "You are too personal," instead of "You are not personal in the right way." There is a foolish notion abroad that mere exchange of one master for many, will of itself raise women's standard. But when we reflect upon their readiness, in the textile and other industries, to sacrifice their children to the factory system, shall we not ask whether the impersonal system of service does not degenerate with fatal facility into the exclusive service of self, which leads back to barbaric enslavement? These impersonal occupations are personal, after all, but in the wrong way. Can an organic democracy be built



up entirely of units whose soul is spent on material gain? It is true that the mere presence of women in factory industry has tended to personalise rightly the impersonal processes of industry. Mr R. Whately Cooke Taylor, in his book, "The Modern Factory System," traces the protection of adult men's persons in industrial processes entirely to protection, originally enforced on employers for the sake first of children, then of adult women. But such unwitting results of the comradeship of women and men outside the family are not enough. The spirit and aims of women entering industry, economics, and politics, must be consciously related to the complaints of men regarding their own man-made system. It must on no account be the merely imitative thing it tends to become. Special attention to the personal side of life, on the part of woman, is as important in the state as in the family. Does anybody, except profit-mongers, complain that too much care is now taken of individual life and character to the detriment of processes of industry? Does anyone think men want women's help in mere productive enterprise and variety of invention? Is there any shortcoming in their desire to produce and to possess the mere means towards life and pleasure? No; the weak functioning in the state is of quite another kind. It resolves itself into the fact that persons—life itself—happiness itself—are being sacrificed to things—to occupations—to processes of industry—to methods for merely storing power, whether in the form of money, of gigantic armies, or of organisation for monopoly. Even the play impulse, in the shape of gambling, they have pressed into the service of the lust for power. But persons, life, and happiness—these are the very things women have always cared for directly. The state wants maternal discrimination. It can never be too much emphasised that persons are the ends of all its organisation and generalisation. Yet women may easily blunder here. Motherly *feeling* is not enough. Women who try to serve the public are already conspicuously attracted to societies which have philanthropical purposes. On municipal bodies they accept as woman's sphere all committees which have to do with individual and bodily needs. But they frequently let themselves be ousted from all that relates to economics. Cal-



culations regarding contracts, all that belongs to business, they leave to men. This is because they have as yet no insight into the fact that it is in the bargaining process of business itself, that persons and character are sacrificed to things. Women cannot further develop their maternal nature at home, unless the Woman's Party studies how to achieve financial independence* for mothers without the need to put an outside career, during maternity, before the interests of their offspring; and in the state they cannot give it adequate expression unless they investigate and reform present relations between gain and merit. Emphasis is laid, in "Women and Economics," † upon the demoralising effect upon woman's character of the lack of any relation for them between production and consumption. Whether women produce human beings or only things, this is certainly a subject they need to consider deeply. But, above all, they need to note a fact Mrs Stetson, either inadvertently or intentionally, omits to point out, the fact that the masculine cash nexus, at present existing, is recognised by all great teachers among men, from Carlyle to the modern ethical economists, to be equally demoralising to men. If women suffer morally from their dependence upon particular persons, these persons suffer as much and often greater demoralisation from the prevalent dependence of gain upon mere acquisitiveness and even predatory ability. The performance at present related to possession is frequently nothing but dead loss, and unwilling instead of willing loss, by some other person. Seeking their own independence, and also as the purchasing agents of the community, women are now compelled to participate in the various sorts of this bargaining process. But they have a choice to make. Will they enter this economic arena merely to imitate men's half-conscious errors? Or will they join ethical democrats in trying to substitute an altogether new relation between personality and gain? Will they take note that the progress of the male sex is acknowledged to be in the direction of that principle of *noblesse oblige* which nature, at the beginning of things,

* New Zealand women who are enfranchised are already studying this question. See "Woman's Signal," March 9, 1899.

† P. 118.



taught them in motherhood—as much personal appropriation as will suffice to produce the utmost possible increase in the quality and amount of service each can render? Beyond this, all things in common. This is the law of family distribution. Is it not the ideal economics for the whole community? Singly, women are helpless in the struggle for this ideal. United, they might assist the fatherhood in men to make the law of the family the law of the state. Democracy will be complete only when the state is a co-operation in which women can join without the present conflict between herself, as differentiated from man by maternity, and her nature as an ordinary human being. Unless the public efforts of women aim at this, they will merely enlarge the breach in their own souls, which has elements of tragedy scarcely yet discernible even to women themselves.

But in proposing that in the coming organisation of women, the ways of motherhood, its personalising tendencies, its standard of discrimination, should be exalted and developed, rather than put out of sight, it may seem that I am repeating the old blunder of treating as superfluous, or as failures, the million or so of our countrywomen who never can be mothers. Yet this is not the case. It is the life and requirements of normal womanhood, and of the majority of women which must give the cue to any policy for women; and it is this which prescribes the ideal of womanhood; for all women, mothers and non-mothers, carry the heritage of motherhood, good or bad in its consequences, in body and soul. Specialisation to occupations, in short, successful careers for them, can only be facilitated through conditions adjusted to a free and complete motherhood. But besides this, the finest of these women, even now, find the idea of motherhood as inspiriting and as personal to themselves, as if they had physically been mothers. For they share the revolt against the crude materialism which limits the motherly function in the social organism to actual bodily services, to domesticity, to physical contact with children, and to the present generation. A larger and deeper conception, in place of this mean one, is the safeguard of all women against reaction to that restriction. Yet it is even possible, if I may be forgiven what may seem a fanciful



division, that just as nuns devote themselves specially to the thought of another sphere than earth, the women who do not actually bear children will be freer than the others to live consciously for future generations. Ancient religions have neglected future generations; and also, as Professor Alexander notes in his "Moral Order and Progress,"* ancient systems of conduct practically ignored the interests of children. We have had ancestor worship, maternal and paternal, but only just a beginning, in Christianity, of the exaltation of offspring, by the dogma of the Sonship of Christ. Race progress as a conscious aim is a quite modern conception, born of evolutionary science. It is the enlargement of conscience in this direction, derived from the study of heredity and attention to physiological causes for moral, mental, and physical deformity and disease, which is one characteristic feature of the ethical religion based upon science. The sense of responsibility, both for man and woman, has been stretched out enormously in time. But it has been stretched out in space also, through the prominence given by science to effects from social and physical environment. Christianity, in emphasising the Sonship of God coupled with the doctrine of the resurrection, taught men and women to see the past and present facts culminating in an ideal future. Through the opening of this vista, it mitigated the tendency to sense worship, which previously had found expression in the worship of each sex by the other, under various Pagan personifications of the generative forces of man. This worship struggled again to the front in the Christian service of knights and ladies; but not wholly without beneficial result, as, after the age of chivalry, the woman's right of choice in marriage was acknowledged. And now modern science emphasises the need to moralise parenthood, no less than the need that parents should hand to their children all their own moral experience and aspiration. The new scientific gospel may, it is true, deprive us of any certainty of self-resurrection, but it offers by the theory of evolution an outlook far beyond the mere self. It points everywhere to childhood as the one thing which should unite men and women, not by

* P. 394.

adoration of each other, but in a fresh chivalry, which shall be a public function for both. Thus all things command woman to follow nature's leading, and to continue to serve the being who, though the most helpless of sentient things, is her easiest starting-point for imaginative foresight. Other concrete images of man's aspirations indicated fathers and mothers markedly incomplete in personality, for they always implied subordination either of man or woman. Before the child, the very symbol of progress and racial strength, they stand equal though not uniform.



THE MORAL INSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN

F. J. GOULD

NEVER did so many generous impulses strive for expression in public life as in the present generation. And never were generous impulses so thwarted for lack of unity and co-ordination. A prophet calls, and the people do not respond. The people sigh, and no prophet stands forward to translate the sigh into speech. When a group of agitators raise a demand, the very victims of injustice are drowsy with despair, and cannot even stagger behind the leaders. One nation longs to deliver the oppressed, but cannot induce others to join in the concert of redemption until the tyrant has wreaked his will, and intervention comes too late. There is a potential music in the world's affairs, but the notes are scattered, the strains are broken, and harmony is unrealised.

The machinery of politics is only spasmodically governed by clear principles. Sometimes the statesman will rely upon coercion, and regard bombshells and gunboats as the first maxims of good administration. Sometimes he will consider trade as the key of life, and commercial expediency as the mainspring of national being. In obedience to a happier instinct, or to a sudden motion of the popular will, he will appeal to the sense of honour and the high traditions of a race. But neither militarism, nor exchange, nor respect for justice is at all seasons the guiding rule. And thus parties, and classes, and nations follow a gust of passion, or a chance theory of their material interests, or the accidental volition of a minister of state. The action of politics is unbridled, and its course can never be predicted.

Our standards of social conduct are irregular. The work-



man will tolerate what the baronet would deem a stain; and an aristocrat will condone an act which the proletariat would scorn. Society religiously guards the chastity of a certain section of its women, and callously accepts as inevitable the prostitution of the remainder. A case of bribery in the law-courts would evoke a cry of horror all over the land, but in business spheres the bribe passes for a normal function. A capitalist who would think himself eternally dishonoured by cruelty to a son or daughter or ward, will exploit the labour of whole masses of the population, and let the evil genius of his profit-making pass like a destroying angel over a thousand homes. It would be a fatal mistake to suppose that these inconsistencies are due to inborn desire to do wrong. They are due to a disordered mind. The just man of to-day often becomes the sinner of to-morrow, not because his disposition has changed, but because he measures himself, or his neighbours measure him, by another standard.

In the religious domain the most striking feature is unrest. Faith oscillates between a mere theological creed and devotion to a pursuit of moral perfection. At one moment the Bible assumes authority, at another the voice of the Church, at another the imperial orders of conscience. The music and colour of aesthetic ritual may sway the pious soul; and this mood may give way to an ascetic and pinched fanaticism; and this, in turn, may yield to an enthusiasm for social improvement. Bigotry and catholicity chase each other like shadows flying over the landscape. One preacher will tell us there are few that be saved, and that God is a consuming fire. He is succeeded in the pulpit by a divine who breathes universal peace, identifies the heathen with sincere seekers after God, and liberally finds room in Paradise for the Unitarian and the Agnostic. Worst event of all, piety separates the spiritual from the worldly, the theological from the moral, and the sacred from the secular; and human nature knows not which pope to obey.

Now, just as a man is taught by philosophy (though not many men learn the lesson) to strive after inward peace, so is it the deepest need of society to be at one with itself. A



man cannot know himself except as one personality, and the unregenerate soul—to borrow church terms—is divided into a true self and an "old Adam," and complies with both the law of the spirit and the law of sin. A society whose culture is incomplete is parted into classes, and split by conflicting interests. And yet, the sane instinct of our race ever leads us towards concord. In politics we make alliances and treaties, we effect compromises, we federate; and even the tendency to the home rule of small states is but a means of preserving wider unions. In the social field, combination is a dominating factor, illustrating its power in syndicates, trade-unions, co-operative movements, and collectivist programmes. Religion more and more feels its way towards universalism, and though Christianity will fail to evangelise the earth, its attempt to do so aids the human mind to rise to the conception of a Religion of Humanity. We use the phrase, the Brotherhood of Man, with increasing frequency, nor do we drop it at the news of a strike or the outbreak of international hostilities. Higher still does our thought rise when we speak of the Evolution of Man, the Service of Man, the Ascent of Man. For then we endeavour to seize humanity as a living essence, joined in congruous parts, and led towards a common aim by harmonious motives. In the midst of chaos we delight in the prospect of unification. We go to war, and hear the distant echo of the song of peace as we march. We sit in dust and ashes, and nevertheless await the glory of our Kingdom.

Modern thought prefers the Formative gospel to the Reformative. The Church has sought to infuse spiritual unity into life by the process of atonement and conversion, through which man is reconciled with God. The newer teaching would rather suggest spiritual construction from the beginning. Character must be built up in morality, and not startled into it by the thunders of the law or an utterance from heaven. The old method was revolution; the new is growth. The teacher must take the place of the political reformer, the social innovator, the religious prophet. Or, if you will, the reformer, the innovator, and the prophet shall continue their offices, but only in closest connection with the educator.



Through him they will secure a stable principle of statesmanship, a uniform standard of social conduct, an intelligent scheme of religion. Through him the influence of habit will effect vaster changes than the barricade or the battle; and the methodisation of thought will reduce the wilderness to a scene of fruitful tillage. We once placed faith in the Emperor. Henceforward we place it in the Child.

Let us, however, take care how we interpret this sentence, "Our faith is in the child." It ought not to mean that we expect the problems of the world to be solved in the school. This would be pædagogy run mad. It means that the solution will begin in the school. It means, also, that the school will be but the starting-point of an education which will extend over youth and prime and age. The crime against the child-soul now so often perpetrated—viz. the deliberate teaching of lessons which the instructor knows will have to be unlearned—will no longer blot our educational method. The child will pass into the school and into the world at the same time. A scholar is ahead of a citizen. It is of immense importance to remember that the mind of the child is essentially the same as the mind of the man. People often talk of the child's mind as if it were a completely different entity from that of the adult. The man's mind is the child's mind enlarged; it is a wider circle struck from the same centre. Little Caesar knew how to quell the Gauls of the playground, and young Veronese saw grace in human figures. The educator who fully comprehends the child fully comprehends human nature. Hence the royal rule is deducible, that the child is to be treated with the same respect and introduced to the same life-problems as the man, with the sole proviso that the teaching should be adapted to his more limited capacities. To know these limitations is to know how to educate.

It follows that the social conscience, without which our democracy will never become ethical, can be, and must be, created in the school. There the child will enter Parliament, learn the elements of jurisprudence, and study the questions of the day. It may be, indeed, that the stranger passing through the class-rooms will hear few allusions to Parliament,



law-suits, or the current topics of the newspapers. But the teacher will have analysed the moral issues out of the weltering mass of the world's experiences, and placed them, by means of suitable vehicles, in view of the child. Rightly handled, the fable, the biography, the picture will present all the salient aspects of the moral life. And who that knows children will deny that they can examine a case of right or wrong with as much keenness as their elders? If the comparison excites a doubt, it will be a doubt whether men and women are always as sensitive as their children. Of course, children often fail to apprehend a problem because they do not understand its local colouring, its environment, and its relativity in time or history. Once they are enabled to surmount these difficulties, they are quick to adjust the scales, and weigh vice and virtue in the balance. Southey's poem of the "Battle of Blenheim" furnishes an example. Old Kaspar's thought was dazzled by the fact that princely personages took part in the transaction, and his vision travelled no further than the "glorious victory." Little Wilhelmine looked at the slain soldier's skull, heard the story of the campaign, and judged as sternly as Rhadamanthus.

We have to bear in mind, also, that the daily life of children raises profound ethical questions. Especially is the young soul quick to seize the master principle of justice. No victim of fate, from Prometheus to Madame Roland, ever felt the sting of injustice more than does the heart of a normal child. Job himself could not cry out more fiercely against destiny than the little martyr who quails under the fist of a bully. People say children are cruel. It is not true; they are not more cruel than their elders. The child hates to see cruelty inflicted on his mother, or father, or brothers, or sisters, because he understands the feelings of his kindred. As soon as he is taught to understand the feelings of animals, he will also hate cruelty to animals; and that is why one lesson in natural history, rightly delivered, will do more to educate a child's sympathies than a hundred warnings against unkind treatment of inferior creatures. It is often affirmed that children have only a faint sense of the beauty of veracity, but this, again, is a mistake. They may smilingly say Yes

instead of No, without the slightest intention to wound or deceive; and they will do so because they have not learned the vital relation between the word and the act or thought. They treat words as babes play with coins, innocently confusing the value of gold and copper. But if a child breaks a vase, and falsely accuses a companion or the companion's sister, the accused instantly flames up with righteous resentment; its insight is perfect, and its moral sense alert to ban the lie. It is, further, a popular misconception that children love disorder. On the contrary, children love order as soon as they comprehend it and as soon as it is made possible to them. They prefer comfortable seats to crowding, quiet lessons to noisy ones, and regular marching from a room to a chaotic and perilous rush; it being the adult's duty to provide the needed accommodation, opportunity, and training. Now, the simple illustrations just cited cover a very large ethical field, for they range over the elements of social order—sincerity, kindness, and justice. In other words, the essential problems of conduct come as much within the child's ken as within that of the grown-up world. A child takes as much interest in what it really knows as a man does; and therefore the child takes as much interest in the moral action and interaction of its own experience as its father or mother does. It is sometimes said that children are quick to perceive the character of a stranger. That is not accurate if it implies the possession of a power which lessens with the passing years. Neither have all children an equal capacity of detection; they differ very much, as their elders do; and while some small people may be deceived with ease, others are gifted with a surprising psychological penetration. If, then, children can appreciate moral values and can perceive distinctions in character; if—that is to say—they experience a lively interest in the ethical world they dwell in, what is more natural than that they should express their ideas on the subject of right and wrong conduct? What is more natural than that they should take a pleasure in gaining clearer ideas and wider views of conduct? Upon what topic should they more willingly converse? What lessons would they learn with more facility? As a matter of fact, do not adults more often speak to children



in the course of any one day upon this theme of conduct than upon any other? What department of life, then, is better fitted than morality to form a subject of education?

Let it be carefully observed that, to the child, the moral always comes in the guise of the concrete, the personal, the tangible. He adores his mother before he conceives the idea of love. He strikes a playmate before he knows the meaning of anger. First the body, then the soul; first the object, then the abstraction; first the deed, then the principle; the accidental passes on to the rule; and the transient leads to the enduring. Whosoever would draw the child to moral truth must begin, as the pupil himself begins, with the concrete. Within the casket of the concrete are hidden all the treasures of the ethical wisdom. Disembodied maxims are the curse of the school. The teacher whose vanity or inexperience allows him to impose fine-sounding abstractions upon his scholars will get no result for his pains. Nature herself will battle with his folly, and protest, through the children's listlessness and inattention, against his pædagogical impertinence. But while, on the one hand, this passion of childhood for the concrete marks out the way for the teacher to walk in, it provides, on the other hand, an answer to the objectors who fear that specific teaching on moral subjects will set up a morbid habit of introspection and self-scrutiny. The real consequence will be quite the reverse. With more facility and with finer perception the child will learn to look out upon the world of men and women, of social action. He will always have at command (so to speak) the faculty of ethical diversion. In the incidents of the school, the home, the street, or the village-green he will see meanings that will rapidly strengthen his understanding of the world, and make of him a man of judgment instead of a vassal of his circumstances. No one suspects politicians or lawyers of feeding upon their own thoughts. Politicians are accustomed to deal with emergencies and crises, and lawyers with prepared but difficult "cases." In either instance, honest politicians and lawyers (for, in spite of conventional sneers, both are common) are continually employed in the resolution of moral problems. Here, if anywhere, one should meet the Practical Reason. Now, if due allowance be made for the metaphor, we might

say that a sound ethical education will train the child as a politician and lawyer. This is no more than saying that he will receive the discipline of a citizen, knowing how to apply his observing faculties and his strongest logical art to the events and questions of daily life. He will handle the tools of discrimination, and constantly keep in touch with the concrete material of human affairs. The whole process is calculated to develop a practical moral athletic, and is itself a counter-agent to morbid and introspective brooding.

The point just dwelt upon entails an important sequel. Too often has the plain man had cause to lament that the ethics of the schools has buried experience alive amid a mass of philosophic abstraction. Daily life teems with difficulties which can only be solved by a clear sense of veracity,—difficulties which occur in domestic relations, in trade, in professional spheres, in civic affairs. If the plain man resorts to the scholar's page he will often find little but generalities of reflection, or quibblings as to formal definitions. And if, perchance, the scholar comes down to the concrete, he will have little to discuss beyond the threadbare riddles,—Ought one to tell the truth to a murderer in quest of a victim? or, Ought one to tell a dying patient that there is no hope of his recovery? The rising intelligence of the democracy will demand an ethics that will rather serve as an instrument of social renewal than as the ninepins of playful dialecticians. The university will still conduct the exposition, but its science will express and formulate the life, the labour, and the musings of the people. As the ancient Hebrews threw their jewels into the common stock in order that Bezaleel and Aholiab might work them into things of beauty for the Tabernacle, so will the democracy bring its pains and pleasures and inarticulate hopes to the trained leaders, who will construct a theory of action and a code of enlightening maxims. The better and stronger the discipline we give to the children, the higher will the democracy of the next generation raise its standard of personal and political religion. This raising of the standard will mean a more effective concreteness in morality. Morality can only become finer by being more closely applied to experience; and the closer application



will never occur until we ensure the co-operation of the masses.

In the day of clearer democratic perception, the prophet's call will meet with immediate response. When he speaks of justice and honour, he will touch chords that had been prepared by the forethought of the educator. When he denounces tyranny and treason, he will hear the answering thunder of the crowd, for each man will have learned, in his earlier years, to know the tokens of fraud and despotism. It is true that, even now, the crowd will cheer the rhetoric which gives glory to moral principle. But there is in the shout more fervour than discrimination. The people feel an impulse to applaud all the ideas that strut the stage in the name of liberty and charity, but they often lack the skill to discern between the false and the true. Ethical education will quicken their faculty of detection. When they respond to the prophet, it will be because their eyes have been trained to distinguish between the specious and the substantial, and their ears have been enabled to separate melody from tumultuous clang.

In order to reach this result, it will be necessary to make character the chief aim of school life. A normal human career comprises many activities, physical, constructive, artistic, commercial, reflective, and moral. In education, these will be provided for by physical drill, by technical and scientific courses, by aesthetic and literary studies, by business training, by lessons on logic and philosophy, and by ethical instruction. One glance at this list will prove that the intellectual nature runs no danger of neglect. The intellect is exercised in physical drill, in technical and scientific courses, in aesthetic and literary studies, in business training, in lessons on logic and philosophy, and not the least in ethical instruction. On the other hand, it by no means follows that the moral nature will be accorded free play. Our tendency has been to turn out acute, rather than honourable, scholars. Yet (though it may appear bold to say so), even intellectual acuteness suffers where the moral sentiment fails. In social intercourse, however limited or however wide, a knowledge of human nature as a whole is

as needful as all other knowledge put together. The man, therefore, who does not understand human nature, will fail in his social purposes. The better he understands human nature, the better he will succeed. If he only comprehends mankind on the economic or prudential side he will make extraordinary miscalculations. In other words, he will betray intellectual confusion; he will have no ability to penetrate to the strongest and most delicate of the springs of conduct. And when, having moved men readily by the strings of economic interest and self-seeking, he finds there is some other and unseen machinery at work, he will confess, in foolish amazement, that he has lost command of his puppets.

For the sake, then, of intellectual education itself, we shall ask that morality may dominate the entire area of instruction. Dominate, but not obscure. It would be absurd to interpose moral exhortations amid the manœuvres of the drill-class. Yet, in many indirect ways, the pupils can be reminded that physical vigour and grace are gifts that should be dedicated to the commonwealth. A man's strength counts most when used in co-operation. Bodily grace has no meaning except as something which attracts the gaze and admiration of one's fellows; and the most graceful motion is the social unison of the dance. Nothing could seem further removed from the moral than the technical and scientific. Yet, when it is remembered that technique was the means by which religious aspiration found embodiment in the architecture of the Parthenon or of St Peter's, it may begin to dawn even on a child that handicraft and eyecraft may lead us from the material to the spiritual. Science itself can be humanised—that is to say moralised—by two methods. The teacher should emphasise the value of science in devising inventions for the saving of life or for broadening the mind—*e.g.* for saving life, surgery, and for broadening the mind, astronomy. And the other method is by linking science with biography, so that the pupil shall know the man Newton as well as the law of gravitation, and the man Darwin as well as biology. When we proceed to business training, the cynic will say that here, at any rate, we had better set ethics aside, and confine



ourselves to consular reports, commercial correspondence, and the laws of distribution and exchange. But democracy, which, with all its faults, is never cynical, will affirm that this is the very department in which the moral factor shall be maintained. It will bid the teacher impress upon the children that business must be one of the severest tests of religion, and that he whose soul does not remain pure in the market, can in no wise be pure anywhere else. Having taught such high doctrine in its schools, the community will perhaps, for very shame, begin to practise it in the workaday world. Aesthetics may or may not have an essential connection with morality; but it is certain that no two things go better together. Music will ease the rugged way of duty. Painting will give its brilliant support to sympathy, and the child who has been taught—as all children should be—to look with silent reverence upon Raphael's "Madonna," will know that the most beautiful may be one with the most tender. It scarcely needs pointing out that literature takes a supreme place among vehicles of ethical instruction. It may be, indeed, that a danger will lie in the over-valuation of books, and the forgetfulness of other admirable modes of teaching.

If it should now begin to appear that in moral education we may find the key to the unification which we so conspicuously miss in modern life, another consideration may confirm us in this idea. Great moral principles are remarkably few in number. They are all practically enumerated in self-control, self-respect, veracity, kindness, duty and justice. Even these virtues are but secondary; and Paul long ago seized upon the central conception when he said that love was the fulfilling of the law. Love is the first step in morality taken by the child. It is the last lesson which the world will learn, but, when it is learned, the democracy will come to full stature. Seeing, then, that the ultimate political principle is one that appeals more than any other to the child, we may confidently assume that, in basing the educational system upon morality, we are pursuing the surest way to social reform and unification.

Moral education covers much more than moral instruction. It should comprise the influence of a well-ordered home, and

the influence of a well-ordered school. A good home should partake of the character of a school, and a good school should partake of the character of a home. The home is a miniature state, its duties a miniature citizenship, and parental wisdom is the statecraft. This is not a mere figure of speech. The germs of all political problems arise in home life. Democracy will never flourish unless its roots are deep-set in rightly-managed homes. And since every politician should also be a practical psychologist, and a parent is a natural politician, it follows that every parent must receive some training in practical psychology. In other words, the democracy must ensure that all young men and women shall attain a measure of skill in understanding and guiding child-nature. For one home ruined by want of love, one may see a hundred spoiled by want of insight into the motives and ideas of the tender generation. Yet an imperfectly governed home is often superior in moral effect to a school based on narrow conceptions of child-nature. We must carefully guard against the bigotry of the pædagogue who regards the parent as an obstacle to a Blue-book ideal. The family is the oldest of our social traditions. Its power to mould the character may often lack discretion, but it surpasses the best school regimentation in depth, pathos, and duration of effects. Whatever progress may be thought advisable in the collective discipline of the young, a wise state will always account home-life the noblest college of its citizens. Apart from purely economic reasons, the democracy will give its anxious thought to the bettering of the homes of the poor, in order that the children of the proletariat may commence their education under happier auspices.

We have already seen that the intellectual side of education fails to secure even mental ability unless it is intimately connected with moral ideas; and these moral ideas, few in number, and culminating in the principle of love, will afford the means of unifying education and life. But before passing on to the subject of the direct moral instruction which shall make this unification conscious to the child, we must briefly indicate methods in which ethics may be realised in habit rather than conveyed in spoken lessons. Two means will



be required. In the first place, school-education (and the same principle applies to home education) must render the child more active and less receptive; he must be a freer agent in his own discipline. In the second place, this wider activity must be suffused with the ethical spirit. To put it another way, education must allow for more conduct and less lecturing, and the conduct must be transformed into neighbourly conduct. Now we must frankly recognise the fact that this sphere of education suffers from neglect. An immense area awaits our study and effort. We may cheerfully anticipate better results on one condition—viz. that the educational authorities shall everywhere encourage teachers to devise practical methods; and sound co-operation may be expected from the more intelligent class of parents. To speak more precisely, it would be well if official publications regularly announced and discussed such improvements as working educators had suggested or had experimentally tested; and it should be understood that such endeavours counted as an important part of a capable teacher's duties. Besides this (if the hint should not seem too startling to conventional opinion) there is no reason why Government itself should not collect, codify, and issue for the information of parents such feasible plans of moral home-discipline as enlightened experience might frame. Meanwhile, a few rough lines must suffice to sketch the general nature of what may be called conduct-training. (1.) A group of exercises which may come under the head of social alertness. These will embrace cleanliness of person and environment; respect for public order in streets, open spaces, vehicles, etc.; various kinds of drill in preparing for emergencies of fire, panic, etc.; ambulance needs; and elementary rehearsals of routine connected with law-courts, public meetings, ballot, etc. (2.) Manual and kindergarten occupations, in which, besides cultivating the skill needed to earn a livelihood or to brighten leisure hours, the pupil will learn the social bearings of punctuality, neatness, regularity of labour, conscientiousness in detail, and the value of co-operative industry. (3.) Ordered recreation, as distinct from the spontaneous romp, for which children should always have ample opportunity. Here,

again, the social qualities are evoked even amid the rush and joy of the game; and the children will see how the pleasure is enhanced by mutual assistance, attention to the weaker or more backward players, and honourable compliance with rules. (4.) Civic excursions to places which give concrete illustration of history, politics, and the organic life of the commonwealth; among such places we may enumerate remains of older civilisations, cathedrals and castles, birth-places and residences of notable personages, houses of legislature, museums, art galleries, harbours, light-houses, mines, farms, engineering works, etc. (5.) Works and visits of social pity. Already scholars in grammar and high schools, and children of upper-class families occasionally contribute to the support of invalid children, cots in hospitals, lifeboats. This species of aid should be extended. Not only should the children subscribe, but the elder boys and girls should personally inspect institutions for the shelter of the poor, the infirm, the blind, the deaf and dumb, the aged, animals, etc. No expedient would be better calculated to arouse intelligent pity and a sense of responsibility. Whatever is done in this direction should be done with an air of good comradeship. A visit to the workhouse will be conducted rather as if it were a call on friends and neighbours, and the slightest display of condescension or a supercilious reference to "these poor people" should be immediately corrected. But if the moral instructor has efficiently carried out his task, the normal child will know how to show kindness without lapsing into the solemnity of the prig.

Intellectual tuition and conduct-training, then, will furnish, so to speak, the pedestal, the limbs and torso of the educational figure; the head and crown being direct moral instruction. This instruction will add wit to feeling, ideas to practice, and spirit to matter. It will illuminate and enforce habit. It will show the whence and whither of conduct. It will give the reason to the deed, enthrone the conscience above the law, and irradiate precept with poetry.

Nothing that is here said should be held to dispense with moral teaching in the home. As previously intimated, it is desirable, and it will become more and more imperative, that



child-management should be better understood by parents, and particularly by mothers. Many reforms, educational and civic, will remain impossible until the reform of the mother is accomplished. But this, in turn, will largely depend upon a rise in school culture. The school and the home interact. Both must be sweetened; and it would be poor pædagogy and worse politics to expect either to succeed without the other. But it must be borne in mind that school instruction is conducted in classes, and that a class has natural advantages over the home. In the class are represented different orders of society, different ranks of mind, different outlooks, different interests, different opinions, different religions—in a word, the class represents the complexities of the state; and this is exactly the groundwork upon which a unifying civic education should be erected. Morality is the simplest of all arts in essence, and the most complex in application. It therefore calls for constant interchange of thought; and this discussion is provided by the words of the teacher alternating with the words of the scholars in question, answer, criticism, and retort. This variety of view is still further enlarged if (as ought always to be the case) the sexes are taught together. For then the men and women of the future step together on the path of inquiry; they consider the problems together, they see the difficulties together, they strive together, they hope together, and they look to the democratic ideal together. Thus, learning and searching together in continuation schools and classes, they will enter on independent social careers with conceptions and tastes diverse according to sex, but yet harmonious and complemental. And of all unities, this of men and women is the most vital.

The instruction must be systematic. It must have allotted hours, careful planning, and definite stages of development. That is to say, it must be treated on the same general method as other and less important subjects. With the youngest children, indeed, this is not so necessary. Their instruction will chiefly take the form of stories of action or imagination, such as the Sleeping Beauty, Robinson Crusoe, the legend of Perseus, the favourite tales of animal life and custom, lively descriptions of plants, etc. This material, however, will be

selected with much discrimination, and in this discrimination, unseen and unsuspected by the children, will lie much of the worth of the teaching. The educator will skilfully present those elements of the story which appeal to the sympathy, and awaken the judgment. These elements need not be named to the children, and the judgment need not be formally applied. Rather by turns of speech, by look and by gesture, the teacher will seek to distinguish one class of actions and sentiments as noble, or indifferent, or mean. Such stories will rank as lessons by reason of their psychological basis, though to the children themselves or to the uninitiated they will partake of the character of amusement. Musical exercises and the intelligent recitation of simple poems will be powerful helps. And these undefined moral impressions will furnish the plasma of the future instruction —a fluid matter out of which the organised tissue of ethical conceptions will be created. The tissue may be formed in different modes, according to conditions of country, school, etc., and should always allow of some reasonable modification to suit the gift and idiosyncrasy of the teacher. Any attempt to over-ride the spontaneity of the teacher would only result in lifeless and unattractive dogma. A plan and an authority are indispensable; but it is not the plan which will hamper the instructor; given the plan, he will rightly demand freedom in the choice of illustration and detail. As a matter of fact, the students who have sketched out systems in France, England, and the United States are virtually agreed in general outlines. They may differ—and it may be wholesome that they should differ—in applications. The following conspectus is laid before the reader as a more or less adequate guide to the nature and range of the topics suited for the instruction of children in primary schools above the infants' grade.

We may conveniently open with lessons which group themselves round the *Self*, such as self-respect, self-control, self-help. Having impressed the children with the use and beauty of cleanliness of person and surroundings, we pass to illustrations of self-control. Let the virtue of temperance



be analysed into its many forms — moderation in eating, drinking, stimulants in general, dress and ornament, and sport; moderation in speech; patience in labour, in bearing difficulty, pain, and suspense. It is evident that, handled in this manner, the conception of temperance would take a broader and healthier range than is popularly accorded to it. Then more strenuous phases of self-guidance come under notice. Perseverance is the next theme; perseverance in working out a purpose, in self-improvement, in face of dangers. This naturally leads us to the duty of courage—courage physical, moral, and industrial; and pains should be taken to show how this quality finds admirable embodiment in the workman who endures hardship, as well as in the traveller or the warrior. We examine self-reliance; self-reliance in the supply of our needs, in learning, in the fulfilling of duties, and even in finding amusements. Prudence has its place in the series, though, of course, the teacher will make it clear that a self-regarding prudence ought to expand into a prudence which guards self-interest in order not to cause distress to friends and neighbours, or which provides against peril to the public.

A second series may deal with the aspects of *Veracity*. Children should have it made clear to them that this quality can be exhibited in action, or in silent demeanour, as well as in speech and conduct. We must point out that truthfulness requires more than the mere refraining from lies; it calls for positive effort towards accuracy of observation and reporting of facts. At this stage we dwell upon the nobility and duty of acquiring knowledge, and the capacity thereby gained for social usefulness. The search for truth will be exemplified in the lives of great discoverers. Veracity must also control our judgment of other people, and thus becomes linked with good-will. School children are not too young to be reminded that the community is agitated by differences of opinion, and that hence both the necessity of honest proof and testing, and of respect for the beliefs of other people. A few talks will not be ill-spent on appearance and reality of character, and on affectation and modesty.



A third section carries us to *Kindness*. Here, as in other departments of the instruction, we shall continually recur to the other salient moral qualities. The kind man must needs exercise self-control and observe veracity. We picture the mother and father, their love, self-denial, and protective labours, and seek to attach the child to the parent rather by evoking sympathy than by precepts of obedience. The mutual duties of brothers and sisters will be considered. Home life will suggest the work, sorrows, joys, and temptations of the greater world outside. Good manners will form an interesting theme, and the teacher will refer all the social amenities to the fundamental motive of respect for the personality of one's neighbour, regardless of class distinctions. Strength and its duties towards the weak and ignorant will afford material for lessons which will pass the narrow limits of the home or school, and cast light upon immense fields of social and national conduct—on duties towards the employed, the poor, the sick, the blind, the deaf and dumb, towards animals, and towards small nations and lower races.

Upon this foundation of order, veracity, and good-will, we build up clear ideas of *Work*, *Duty*, and *Honour*. Industry is seen to be an aid to health, a social obligation, and the only maker of wealth. In the creation of wealth a circle of many important qualities is called into action—self-reliance, honesty, considerateness towards fellow-labourers. These again culminate in the ideal of duty, and duty is yet more refined by the sense of honour. Elementary ideas of *Justice* will have special consideration, though the influence of justice will naturally be felt in the study of the whole round of morals. And though the value of *Habit* can never be properly realised by mere conversation on the topic, yet the intelligent discussion of habit will lend a greater pleasure and stimulus to practice.

It is true that our series began with the Self; and we have spent much time in simply looking at the relation of our well-doing to one person—a mother or a neighbour—or to a comparatively small group; and yet a more extensive view has continually opened. Every individual virtue is many-windowed, and reveals prospects of wide social realms. After the



first year or two the social conception should be definitely expanded into what we may call a second stage of instruction:—

The teacher will now draw upon the facts of anthropology and the history of culture, with the object of illustrating *Mutual Dependence*. He will sketch the rise of the family, and the augmenting affection and respect between parents and children, brothers and sisters, family and family, tribe and tribe. The social power of example, of companionship and friendship, will be portrayed. Then the cross-influences of trades and professions, brain-work and muscle-work, town and country, nation and nation will be glanced at; and new attractions will be added to the study of geography when the map of the world teems with suggestions of the mutual helpfulness of race to race and zone to zone. Then the teacher may work backwards, and demonstrate the links which bind the present to the past. Our debt to our forefathers and foremothers will be proved by our furniture, architecture, tools, roads, canals, dykes, railways, shipping, and the like; and each of these subjects will involve interesting stories of inventors and inventions. Much more than this we must learn. Our manners and customs; our social and political institutions; our letters and literature and arts may all be traced, by means of simple examples, to their remote sources. Here will be the place to evoke feelings of reverence towards those relics of antiquity—old abbeys, old monuments, old cities—which visibly tell our connection with bygone centuries. Here, too, with an earnestness that will compel the special attention of the children, the instructor will narrate the leading episodes in the careers of religious founders, and will bring into relief the chief moral ideas of Egypt, China, India, Persia, Arabia, Greece, Rome, Judaism and Christianity. These moral ideas will not necessarily take form in texts, but in characteristic parables, poems, myths, and incidents in national history.

Again the teacher will turn to *Justice*, and with deeper implications—justice in the workshop, office, and public service; justice between employers and employed; justice in relation to property, debts, trade, gifts, etc.; justice towards personalities,



involving condemnation of slavery and oppression, and the right treatment of animals. Hence we pass readily to questions of intellectual and civil liberty.

From the very outset the thought of *Citizenship* has made its presence felt. We now develop it more systematically. The primitive and mediæval state will be pictured, with illustrations, touched in lightly, from the ideal commonwealths of Plato and Sir Thomas More. Then, in graphic review, we inspect the work of the modern municipality and state; the work of parliaments; taxation; courts of justice; prisons; local government; roads, bridges, parks, light, water, sanitation, coinage, markets, factories, postal department; fire-brigades; army and navy; museums, galleries, schools, and the civic place of education. With all these divisions of social work will be combined respective duties—duties in the care of families, in earning honourable livelihood, in the friendly admixture of classes, in the exercise of the franchise, in care for public property and honour, and in merciful treatment of those who commit wrong against the commonwealth. Three ideas, which indeed have all along suffused the instruction, may be emphasised at the closing stage—viz. those of *Progress*, *Co-operation*, and *Peace*; and they will be seen striving for expression alike in the home, the village, the nation, and the race. Three helps will always be at hand, from the earliest lesson to the last—*Nature*, *Art*, and *Play*. At every possible point natural scenes and processes should be introduced, and works of art, musical interludes, and amusement should assist to lighten the seriousness of the central themes.

The plan of moral instruction just detailed contains material enough to extend over a school-course of five or six years, and is, indeed, capable of indefinite enlargement. Nevertheless, the whole structure rests upon a few great conceptions of order, truthfulness, duty, justice, love—ideas which are so elementary as to appeal to the understanding and heart of a child, and which are so sublime that they can only gain full realisation in the Age of Gold. Who, then, will doubt that in such an education, daily imparted by the living voice, illumined by the interchange of thought between teacher and pupil, and



applied to tender and impressionable minds, the democracy will find the grand instrument of unification?

But it may be objected that, while the unification is desirable, and the plan of instruction adequately clear, we have not ensured the indispensable factor of the child's interest. Philosophers propose, but the child disposes; and the native instinct of youth may triumph over the most elaborate pædagogy. We have, indeed, already given the reply and the key in pointing out the child's passion for the concrete. Following the greatest precedents, we shall, like Sophocles, Jesus, Shakespeare, and Goethe, teach through *vehicles*. A vehicle will mean a story or a symbol within which a moral lies lodged, and which, by its natural interest, gains ready access to the understanding and sympathy.

The literary vehicle will obviously take the first place. Fairy-tales, as we have before allowed, will be used mainly in the preparatory stage. Even there, they will need judicious editing. Their folk-lore origin has stamped many of them with crude and even repulsive sentiments. Real life, it is true, abounds with the crude and the repulsive; but that is no reason why these elements should be thrust upon the child before it has learned the skill to discriminate. Perhaps Hans Andersen, in his exquisite modern refinement, revolted overmuch against the barbaric directness which often characterises the folk-tales of Grimm; but his tendency was ethically correct, and expert writers may still find work to do both in creating new and purifying old stories of elves and fays. Fables, parables, and allegories are eminently suited as vehicles of moral ideas. Fairy-tales belong to the order which we may call (to repeat a metaphor already employed) plasmic—*i.e.* they contain a mixed mass of ethical elements which float in picturesque disorder, and which, discreetly used, may prepare the child-mind for a stricter method. In fables, parables, and allegories an end is consciously aimed at by the narrator, though it is not revealed to the eye of the learner; and these literary devices possess a concrete interest which appeals alike to young and to old. Æsop furnishes an ample store, and yet these fables need to be sifted, lest the prudential aspect of morality should occupy too large a space. The apologue of

the Fox and the Mask points a serviceable lesson; but its conclusion—that we may often be deceived by fine manners and pretensions—is not an ethical idea of the first rank. That cautious self-defence which hates to be cheated is still a needful part of the whole armour of morality, but it ought not to be prized so highly as in times of less culture. A happier type may be found in Krilov's fable of the Roots and the Twigs. We catch the joyous songs of the topmost twigs of a tree as they wave in luxurious sunlight and thrill with the lively breeze. And then a plaintive note is heard from underground; it is the dirge of the roots who murmur, "We are they who in darkness provide you with nourishment. We are the roots of the tree on which you flourish. Rejoice in your beauty; but remember that, if the roots perish, the tree will die." The analogy, of course, is crude, and needs to be corrected by other presentations; but it helps to suggest a relation between the material and the spiritual, or, let us say, between a proletariat and an aristocracy. Parables are less manageable than fables, since they often enshrine a theological doctrine, but they may be introduced with much effect. The telling incidents of the story of the Good Samaritan form a complete drama of ethical religion. If the folk-lore portion of the book of Job (omitting the poem) is treated as a parable, it gives a very moving illustration of the moral splendour of fortitude under trial. Of allegory one may, with a little ingenuity, find sources in such stories as that of Perseus or Hercules; or Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" will yield material which may be modified and newly-pointed. To take but a slight example, the Man with the Muck-rake affords a vivid embodiment of vicious taste, and the Man in the Cage will represent the enslaving power of bad habit. Much help may be derived from the poets. Shakespeare will tell children how love lightens toil, for he will show them Ferdinand bearing Prospero's heavy logs without rebellion because he serves Miranda's father. At a first glance one might deny that Browning could contribute anything intelligible to our treasury. But children will listen absorbed to a simple adaptation of his "Halbert and Hob," or "Hervé Riel," or even the singular history of a Roman Emperor's lowliness of spirit ("Imperante



Augusto natus est"). About all these vehicles there hovers a certain iridescence of imagination, a certain quaintness and magic, which hinder even the dullest child from supposing that they stand for exact transcripts of real life. They suggest the symbolic rather than the actual, and poetical vagueness rather than prosaic exactness. With fiction usually so-called the case is different. Fiction seeks to create the illusion of reality, and it may well be doubted if, on so serious a subject as Conduct, children's minds should be excited by the ingenuities of the novelist. If the teacher relates a story of heroism or loyalty, he will suffer well-deserved embarrassment when, to the child's question, "Is that true?" he must needs answer "No." To what purpose is all our earnestness of instruction if the scholar is to be roused only by invented examples? Or why have good men and women of the past lived and toiled, unless to inspire us by their word and work? When we put aside the imaginative, the quaint and the magic, and profess to step down to the level of fact, why not cite life itself rather than the "realistic" imitation of life? Why narrate make-believe cases of human fraternity when, in one or two unaffected sentences, we can picture Abraham Lincoln entering the captured town of Richmond, and taking off his hat to a negro who saluted him, while a lady at a window witnesses the scene with surprise and disgust. Why conjure up fanciful heroes when the pages of biography swarm with perfectly authenticated incidents of courage—such as that, for instance, of old Davenport of Stamford, who, when the Connecticut legislature, in 1780, timidly proposed to adjourn because of an eclipse of the sun, moved for candles to be brought in, saying that, if the last day had come, he desired to be found in his place and doing his duty? Who indeed knows not that, if all literature had been blotted out of existence yesterday, the record of the world's life and labour to-day would renew the epic of virtue?

Many other vehicles might be enumerated. One of the most popular will be the picture. There was a time (or has it quite passed away?) when a school was considered tastefully decorated if charts of the liver and pancreas

adorned the walls in company with a view of the inside of a steam engine or the anatomy of a herring. These designs make more for accuracy than inspiration. The walls of a school should glow with the faces of the mighty dead, and with scenes from the annals of the race. When the teacher spoke of moral courage the scholars would, mayhap, call up the features of Socrates; magnanimity, Pericles; self-government, Marcus Aurelius; mercy, Elizabeth Fry; patriotism, Mazzini. And when the instructor told of art, he would point to the Parthenon; of majesty, Rome; liberty, Runnymede; of democracy, the Bastile. Sculpture will contribute suggestions. The very rocks and flowers will yield us their parables. Music will give enrichment to the bareness of our words. Gesture itself has its eloquence for children, and they know the difference between the open hand of generosity and the closed fist of avarice.

Largely through the influence of moral instruction we might strengthen that historical sense which enables us to know the past and hence to know ourselves. Carrying with them the few simple ideas which we have detected as the practical elements of morality, the teacher and children will find their way amid the maze of events, see an increasing human purpose in the ages, and catch glimpses of the ethical movement of mankind. In what detail this process should be illustrated, what principles of selection should govern the choice of material from the histories of many great nations—these are problems that might well engage the attention of our acutest educationists; and perhaps that is the same as saying our acutest politicians. For only thus can we hope to make the nations know each other. Let the children of one land learn the good qualities of all others, as well as become conscious of the high possibilities of their own. International peace will never arrive through saying "Let us be one." It will arrive when education has taught us all that, in the essentials of morality, nature has already made us one.

Not only must the lessons on right conduct possess a concrete interest, but the personal manner of presentation must also attract. This object may be attained in two ways,



the catechetical and the dramatic. The catechetical rouses the children to think independently, and, by the interplay of question and answer, admirably represents the social and mutual character of ethical principle. But the teacher must beware of applying over-pressure. Peremptory insistence upon replies, or a tedious perseverance in cross-examination, will repel the child's affection and even injure the fineness of the moral sentiment itself. For, in a teacher who talks of kindness and reverence, nothing is so impressive as his own kindness and reverence. The second method is the dramatic; and it should certainly be cultivated by all persons who are training themselves for the work of education. All children are either tragedians, comedians, or playgoers—that is to say, they either take delight in acting or in watching the movement of life. And since, as has been repeatedly pointed out, our instruction must join the school with the world, and lessons with reality, it will be the teacher's duty to practise the art of dramatic narration in order to imitate life. "All the world's a stage," and even more so to the child than to ourselves. Therefore the moral life must largely reveal itself to the young mind in dialogue, modulation, attitude, and motion. The requirement is not so formidable as it seems. One may pick up hints by listening to a mother or a nurse telling a story to a four-year old child; or, conversely, by listening to a child telling the mother or the nurse the story of an event which it has itself witnessed. We may blame a child for dulness of apprehension because he pays no attention to our prosy expatiations on virtue; but if the child walks from the class-room into the street and eagerly watches the overturning of a cart, the passage of a drove of sheep and the sheep-dog, or the mode in which a playmate decides to spend a penny, we may take it that our pedantry is more at fault than his instinct. Scarcely anything can injure our moral instruction so much as the uninteresting, just as the listless exegesis of the pulpit has been a worse enemy of religion than the fire of persecution. Dead precepts cannot interpret living principles.

In the beginning of moral instruction—the plasmic period—it is enough if we suffuse the teaching with indefinite moral sentiment, while taking care to render the words "orderly,"

"truthful," "kind," "just," "honest," etc., more and more familiar, and more and more clear in connotation. In the next stage, the word will broaden into the maxim and the brief reflection; and where we once said, "King Crœsus was rich, but was not happy," we shall now tend to generalise, and say, "Men may be rich, but yet not happy." Nothing better exercises the teacher's art than careful observation of the critical moment when the scholars will receive the principle with as much interest as they receive the example. No theory can regulate the time and place. Environments differ, the moods of the children differ, the phases of the teacher's enthusiasm differ. The point at which abstract statement may be ventured upon, and perhaps elaborated, can only be appreciated by the intuition which comes of experience. But gradually the vehicles may be presented less conspicuously; gradually the maxims may be refined into the faint inceptions of a life philosophy. Youth, guaranteed by years of careful training in concrete ethics against the perils of morbid brooding, may now begin to estimate the inner forces and springs of conduct. It will make tremulous experiments in judgment of character and motive. It will feel the fluttering birth of life-purpose and rightful ambition. In the continuation school, in the technical class, the college, the reading-circle, the guild, the junior association for various forms of intellectual culture, youth will expand the conceptions already so well based, and test the maxims by original inquiry and activity. If the moral education has been honestly and astutely carried out, the young man will pass without shrinking along the wider avenues and along less beaten paths. For this world of manhood will not appear filled with strange people and inexplicable objects. Youth, now conscious of its strength and loyalty, will go out fearlessly to face facts and problems. To use a metaphysical figure of speech, the young man's discipline has given him the "forms" in which his life experiences will be moulded. He enters the industrial sphere, and is not dismayed by the novelty of the workshop, the machinery, the apparently conflicting energies and interests, material or moral; for he has learned the nature and value of labour, and the mode of interaction of human wills. The domain of politics will not be-



wilder him, for he has learned to detect the elemental wants and desires and motives which animate individuals, and groups, and nations; he knows the meaning and method of government, and the qualities which leaders need and which intelligent following requires. The yet more fateful realm of the sexual life he may approach with a step made surer by wise hygiene and by careful training of the imagination. We have pre-supposed all along that the sexes are co-educated, not with rigid continuity (many occasions will call for divergence of classes and studies), but with enough companionship to create mutual ease of behaviour, mutual good-humour and entertainment, mutual respect, mutual understanding. In addition to this method, a skilful instruction will have forestalled the approach of the master-passion by psychological defences. The noblest pieces of art in painting or sculpture will have been familiarised to the eye from the earliest years, and lines and colours that, to the ill-taught gaze, would only suggest distraction and unmanning, will now reveal themselves in grace and dignity and chaste brilliance. The verse of poets and the living pictures of the dramatist will have rendered the history of true love smooth, at least to the eye and ear, and will have made ready the young soul for the inevitable crisis. Even a correct conception of marriage can, at a relatively early period, be impressed in outlines which, if few in number and simple in the sketching, may at least be bold and healthy; and to this end the hints of biography and history may be discreetly applied. And there is yet another department of life for which a sound education will have equipped our scholar—the solemn chambers of religion. He will tread this ground with reverence, and with manly assurance. History, spread before his view with a free hand, will have taught him how the first crude theology has refined itself into the principles of science, and how obedience to supernatural law has transformed itself into the religion of humanity. A clear acquaintance with the great faiths and scriptures of the world will have unveiled to him the secret unity of the creeds and the inner fraternity of races. He will know that everywhere conscience lives and moves and has its being in personal and civic conduct; and that the essential springs of conscience are everywhere the same, need-

ing only larger intercourse and a blending of material interests to harmonise its dictates all over the world. In the enlightening of conscience, in the work of self-development, in the service of man, he will recognise the central object of religion. The good life will be the true faith.

If, from the prospect of this catholic scheme of education we turn to the actual methods pursued in our primary and secondary schools, whether conducted on a private or public basis, the situation is not reassuring. Instead of the all-important unity which we have demanded as a means towards an ethical democracy we find neither an avowed nor a practical aim at the production of manly and womanly character as the first care of education. This or that literary or technical attainment or standard of general knowledge is the object of pupil, parent, and teacher, and the moral discipline, though often spoken of as the supreme factor, is virtually treated as subordinate. The Voluntary and Board schools subsidised by the state present an extraordinary division of purpose. A great line of cleavage is drawn between the teaching of reading, the sciences, etc., and the teaching of the principles of religion —these principles being popularly supposed to embrace all the necessary incentives to good conduct. So much secular time is allotted to the Government Code, the hour left over each day being usually devoted to religious instruction founded on the Bible or on the Bible as illustrated by denominational creeds. The secular Code contains a few faint allusions to the training of character, and there is a gratifying disposition to enlarge the scope of such references; but it would be wholly untrue to say that the Education Department in this country has attempted to give a moral unity to the work of the school. As a matter of fact, the results are highly variable. A teacher here or there will seek to arouse that spiritual tone which makes all the difference between mechanics and life. Educational authorities do not adequately encourage these efforts at elevation. On the so-called religious side the facts occasion serious misgiving. The religious teaching, which is alleged to supply the springs of conduct and the inspiration to honourable citizenship, is excluded from the criticism or report of



Her Majesty's Inspectors. Its influence may or may not extend over the secular area of school life. Good, bad, or indifferent, it is hedged off by Act of Parliament. If the religious instruction now in vogue supplies the cohesive power of thought and conduct it ought to be organically related to the general structure of education. If it does not supply this power, it ought not to be given at all. But of what elements is it composed? and have these elements a right of entry into the school discipline? The elements are theology, and an incomplete system of morality which rests upon the theology. Now theology is a lessening motive-force in individual and civic life; it is unrecognised as a valid sanction of conduct by a very considerable number of thoughtful people; it has no tendency to classify the child's ideas of right and wrong as things distinct from the commanded and the forbidden; and it has a disintegrating effect on the historical sentiment. The other element—the incomplete system of morality—cannot provide the rich and full principle we stand in need of. We need a moral teaching which will show the child his place in nature by giving him a sound conception of the past history of the human race; but the present method confines his study chiefly to the fortunes of the miniature nation of the Jews. We need a moral teaching which will show the child his place in society by giving him a sound conception of the parts and functions of the commonwealth of which he is the offspring and nursling; but the present method holds up before him the example of a religious teacher who expressly shut out secular politics from his gospel. The orthodox method may have served a useful purpose in its time. It may still, and doubtless does, enshrine portions of ethical truth which must on no account be allowed to lapse. But, as an educational system, it is narrow; it is obsolete; it is fatally detached; and it must be displaced by a more efficient instrument.

Our educational incoherence is no accident. It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual weakness. This singular cleavage in the daily work of our elementary schools (and there is a similar cleavage in other schools)



betokens an unhappy schism between the ideal and the material in life and in society. The ideal and the material must be combined. Knowledge must not diverge from wisdom. Religion and politics must be undistinguishable. The intellect must not be appreciated only as a tool of art or commerce, and morality only as a luxury reserved for the pleasant lounging-places of human life. But morality must vitalise art and commerce; and intellect must rationalise the motives and affections. How, then, shall we set about filling up the cleavage? How shall we begin the reconciliation of love and expediency, and the economic and the spiritual? How else, indeed, than by means of the most stable, the most powerful, and the most holy of all affections—namely, parental tenderness? What passion, what energy can compare with this in ability to purify human thought and action? Will political ambition, will the struggle for markets, will the race for wealth, will devotion to science, will the enthusiasm of a church—will any of these things bring us the peace and the co-ordination which we have hitherto prayed for in vain? Will any lever act so mightily as that instinct which hallows all it touches—the instinct of the mother and father? And if the whole adult community could pause amid its weary quest for health and music, and look at its children who shout in the playing-fields, will it not see there the opportunity by which, with less jealousy and mistrust than anywhere else, opposing views may be harmonised and competing interests brought into partnership? And if parenthood thus goes on friendly embassy to the school and asks for aid in the making of a nobler plan of life, the spirit of education must, in turn, shake off its pedantry and emerge into vital contact with the world. If politics consents to abate its fury and seek quiet consultation with the teacher, the school in turn must acquire a new virility of character and a finer amplitude of purpose. When the elders of the commonwealth visit the school they will hear the shrill voices tell the tale of the earth's past and speak of the duties, the movements, and the progress of the great world beyond the playground. And when the children pass, first from the discipline, and then from the kindly companionship of the educator, they will know they are only



rising in the scale of citizenship which began at the mother's knee. They will perceive no break in the moral or intellectual continuity. They will be ready to dedicate to the service of the Common Life the manhood and womanhood which education unfolded. At the mention of the names of noble forefathers and foremothers their hearts will leap as at familiar sounds. When the orator speaks their trained ears will select the true word from the false. When the prophet calls they will answer. When combination is needed they will swiftly form the ranks and comprehend the leader's bidding. Class will respect class; and the nation will extend to neighbouring peoples the friendship which is based on knowledge of their history and admiration of their better qualities. The people—the whole people—will live in consciousness of its progress from crueller centuries and harder fates, and it will have learned, from its youth upwards, to walk in the way of fellowship. Now fellowship is ethical democracy, and education is its instrument; and the rise of ethical democracy will be the rise of the final religion of mankind.



THE ETHICAL END IN EDUCATION

MARGARET MCMILLAN

"EVERYTHING," said John Bright, "that can possibly be said about Education has been said a hundred times over."

There is, of course, a certain amount of truth in this statement. The highest moral maxims that can possibly be given were spoken long ago, "Do to another what ye would that he should do to you, and do *not* to another what ye would should *not* be done to you," said Confucius. "Love thy neighbour as thyself," said the Nazarene. These unsurpassable rules of life were given and accepted, many centuries ago, by millions.

But between acceptance and obedience there is a deep gulf to be bridged—or, rather, a long uphill journey to be travelled. In the prisons of England may be seen instruments of torture which were once freely used by Christian jailers, under the eye of Christian judges, approved by Christian people. Witches were burned, traitors broken at the wheel, insane persons barbarously punished almost under the shadow of the Church. But within the Church the gospel of love was preached, and it was generally assumed that those who listened could understand, and that those who understood could obey.

Even to-day a great deal is taken for granted. We no longer burn people because they see visions, nor expect self-control from the insane. But that wonderful faith is still put in exhortation, is proved by the number of sermons preached and optimistic moral treatises published every year. "Be honest." "Be virtuous." "Be noble." If one could be noble or virtuous for the asking, one would be noble and virtuous without exhortation at all. Alas! for the myriads who read and hear



such commands and cannot obey them, who can truly say that "the will to do right is present with them, but how to perform they know not."

"But," it may be argued, "where an isolated preacher fails a community may succeed." In a society where the larger number have a high standard of morality, the tyrant and the violent person are restrained by force of example. Thus groups of armies of allied moralists may overcome the evil in the hearts of the fiercer minority. But even this cannot be conceded. When the temperate, energetic white man appears among the most violent type of savage, the savage is said to be converted. In the large majority of cases he is simply overpowered. He languishes under a moral code which is too hard for him, and disappears at last from the presence of the invader; and there are plenty of moral barbarians in the midst of our civilisation. There are myriads who suffer a martyrdom through the restraints imposed on them by a community whose standard of conduct is higher than their own. Some of these may be educated by their sufferings. But a much greater number of them elude the popular vigilance and sin in secret, while others languish in a social atmosphere that is at once too genial and too searching. Marie St Clair droops in the house where her husband's mild rule imposes new restraints on her. Formerly her blows were swift. She expressed all—avenged all. Now she is arrested and baulked continually. Life becomes difficult for her—unsustained by any emotion that can make sacrifice easy. Exhausted at last through the continual recoil of violent impulse she falls into chronic bad health. Every nation has its Marie St Clairs. The West Indian mistress became an invalid when the slaves were freed. The great French Lady pined—after the Revolution. It is notorious that the women of the Russian aristocracy suffered acutely under the new moral *régime* imposed on them by the emancipation of the serfs. They developed various nervous diseases and weaknesses, which in many cases probably shortened life. It is clear that the question of ethical and moral development is not one of mere exhortation on the part of the teacher, or even of willingness on the part of the taught. There is something else; there is something more. There are many other

things, by us, alas, unsuspected! Our assumptions are great when we make even the smallest ethical demand on others. Forty years ago little or nothing was known of the functions of the human brain. The human will was recognised as a great Cause; but it was not yet recognised as the last of a long series of effects. The teacher might be excused in these days for assuming a great deal. But to-day new light is thrown on the working growth of the human mind, thanks to the labours of modern psychologists.

We know a little more. And we are not quite so bold. We understand that we are yet on the threshold of a new art and science of pædagogy.

In short, we know that Mr Bright was wrong. Everything has not been said that could possibly *now* be said on the question of education.

. . . . . .

When we look at an infant, we see that in him life expresses itself very simply. He feels, and his sensations are translated at once into movements—aimless movements—endless movements—that is all.

But there comes a time when those aimless movements are arrested. The infant's eyes begin to rest vaguely on some moving light or glittering object. He turns his head on hearing a voice or a noise of some kind. Then the mother says, "He has begun to notice!" She feels that he has taken a great step forward.

The mother is right. The child who notices has taken a great step forward. And already in this advance we have all the conditions of progress laid down unmistakably. The advance became possible through a check or interruption of the nerve currents passing from various centres. This check itself was caused by a more or less sudden and vivid feeling experienced by the child. The flame, or the glittering thing attracted him—that is to say, gave rise to a feeble and yet more or less differentiated sensation in him for a moment. He *was interrupted*—and at the same time impelled to take a step forward in life. In a more advanced stage of existence progress is not so easy, but the conditions of advance are the same.

For example: Here is a child called B——, the son of



vicious parents. He has been neglected from infancy—has had to find his own food and live almost like an animal. He steals when he is hungry—he steals also when he is not hungry—pockets anything that is within reach. If a playmate offends him in ever so slight a way—by a look or a word—he strikes him with all his might, and without hesitation. The blow is as swift as the winking of an eyelid or any other reflex movement. Now, moral or even mental advance depends, for B——, as well as for the infant, on the arrival of a check or interruption. But what can "check" him? What can intervene between sensation and act — postponing the latter? "Check" or interruption is possible only through *the swift awakening of a new feeling*, a feeling stronger than that which impels him to strike.

"I will awaken this new feeling," said the religious teacher of bygone centuries. And he preached of fire and brimstone and the awful tortures inflicted throughout eternity on the damned. "I must continually apply checks through the awaking of new feelings," thought the schoolmaster of no very remote generation. And he carried a cane just as a musician carries a tuning-fork, or a soldier a bayonet. Mr Creakle, we are told, began the day's work by putting the whole school into tears. He took time by the forelock, and we must admit that his methods were very efficacious. "Under the influence of grief," says Ribot, "the voluntary motor apparatus becomes enfeebled. The vaso-motor apparatus contracts, so that the various organs and tissues are deprived of blood." That is to say, grief drains the sources of energy. A very powerful depressive agent. But there is another which is still more powerful—to wit, Fear. We speak of grief "oppressing" a man, or "pressing heavily" on a woman. But in speaking of the effects of fear we are more dramatic. We say, "He was paralysed by fear." "She was transfixed by horror." And we do well to use such terms. For terror does paralyse. During the first moments of fear the heart may beat faster, so as to come to the help of the perturbed brain. But even this rallying of the central organ of life is of short duration. After the first moment the heart itself seems to stand still. The victim is literally paralysed.



Here, if you will, is an emotion calculated to produce a check! Here is "interruption"—with a vengeance!

But, though progress implies arrest, it does not imply paralysis. On the contrary, progress involves only that arrest which makes a new activity possible. The infant of a few days or weeks makes only aimless movements. Nervous currents flow in a diffused way towards the brain centres, and are there transformed into the twitchings and tremblings which we see. Later these currents are restrained. The child's eyes rest on *one* object out of all those around him. But this arrest means — not inactivity — but new activity— that is to say, *movement of a new kind.* The child "sees"— what *change* these words imply, what swift, mysterious advance. Paralysis! The motionless limbs, the wide eyes of the attending child indicate, not paralysis, but *entrance into new life.*

"But," say the friends of the old *régime*, "waste of energy is, after all, unavoidable. Fear and grief imply suppression— and even waste. But the fear of punishment which at first restrains, may at last engender a love of well-doing." How little justification have we for this supposition! "From fear," says Goethe, "the natural man struggles to freedom. He desires to get quit of the dreaded object or person, and feels himself happy when he has put it aside. The natural man repeats this operation millions of times in a life-time." No generation has ever had so much reason to endorse these words as our own! All the dissent, all the nonconformity in the world cannot take the Europe of to-day from the Europe of the past, or make the generation independent of all those that preceded it. From our elementary schools thousands of young people troop forth every year, who congratulate themselves on their freedom, who show by every word and action that they have got rid of something, and are glad to be rid of it. From what have they been set free? Why, from the shadow of fear. The dread of eternal punishment haunted their fathers. They have escaped from it. They fear the God of evil and his spirits no more than they fear elves or brownies. But do they hate the evil-doing from which their fathers were restrained through fear? Alas, no! For juvenile crime has increased rather than diminished within the past forty years



in almost every civilised nation. But, to turn from children and young people, what about older and more responsible persons? Not only have the people of our century been released from fear of a supernatural kind; they now enjoy a new liberty in worldly matters. People were once afraid to sell, or even to buy, freely. But now we trade freely, buy and sell what we please, and where we please. Did the old bondage prepare us for this liberty? We have little reason to think so. Usury was once believed to be a crime. Who thinks of it now as such? It was believed some centuries ago that to do good work was the first duty of a workman. Now we have firms which manufacture only shoddy things—master and man agreeing to do bad work. In short, everything is done that was once prevented—that is to say, evil-doing was prevented through fear of punishment—in vain! Terror subdued, but did not educate the race. Education had to begin where terror and restraint ended. All the seeming virtue, that was the fruit of terror, was discounted on the first morning of liberty! And the evil that has remained dormant for generations broke forth. It is breaking forth now in our milder social atmosphere. It is appearing full blown in the heart of communities who have none the less progressed since they have learned a new tolerance and conceived a new idea of human justice.

The first question we have to answer then is this: "Of what emotions other than the depressing, wasteful, and useless emotions of fear and grief is a child capable?" And this question provokes a smile, for we all know how susceptible the average child is to other emotions. We have seen him clap his hands and dance about, almost beside himself with joy over an event which appears to us quite insignificant. We know that (unless he has been quite stupefied by routine work) his curiosity and interest in the world around him know no bounds. His most powerful temptations are those which prompt him to go to forbidden places, at forbidden times, in order to find out forbidden things in a forbidden manner. Curiosity—the desire to know, view, understand, or experience—is the salient characteristic of the normal child. He may be rendered dull and apathetic. But this is not his normal condition. Not only does he possess the faculty of attention—

in an undeveloped, not a developed form, of course—but the possession of this faculty is the most obvious thing about him!

The feeling which gives rise to attention is not a voluntary, but an involuntary one. A boy does not choose to like ships, or animals, or engines. He may, on the contrary, wish to pay attention to algebra or the Latin Grammar, subjects which his parents desire him to study. Yet the butterfly or the engine arrest him, and as he has only a limited amount of psychic energy, as, moreover, accumulation and concentration in one group of nervous centres means inaction in others, he forgets his Latin Grammar, his parents' desires, and perhaps even his schoolmaster's cane. He attends to what he must attend to.

And little as we may approve of engines or butterflies, we have to acknowledge not only that natural and spontaneous attention is a good thing, but that it is the only possible *basis of any intellectual life.*

Spontaneous activity does not readily exhaust. The enforced and frequent cessation of it gives rise to much weariness and *ennui.* The child of five or six runs about all day. Try to do as he does, and you will be exhausted in an hour, and yet he is not exhausted. It is only when you force him to keep still that he looks tired.

Make him sit at a desk, and he may fall asleep. But how dreadful "bed-time" seems to him when he is playing in the garden on a summer night, or romping in the nursery on a winter evening! Well, spontaneous attention is one form of spontaneous activity. The average child will spend hours over an occupation which interests him, forgetting even to take his meals. His parents may at last have to compel him to put away the books, or toys, he delights in. He is not tired, even when he gives them up, but looks fresh and eager as if he had just wakened from sleep. The attention he is giving is a kind of continuous reflex action sustained by emotion. And this sustaining emotion wells up within the heart like a living spring. Such attention yields, as Ribot has pointed out, *the maximum result with the minimum effort.* And the truly successful teacher is simply the teacher who knows what the child spontaneously attends to, and endeavours, not to evolve a fictitious power of attention from no materials whatever,



but to build up the power of voluntary attention from the involuntary.

But the cardinal sins of the leaders in education of this county have been sins against the involuntary and the subconscious—sins against the power of emotion as the sustainer of all vigorous mental and moral life. Our examination halls are crowded with young people who can answer questions on the Staff Notation, but who have no real love of music, who "get up" geography and can tell you the exact height of various mountains, but who have no appreciation of the beauty of the wood that overshadows their own city, or the stream that winds through their own glen. They learn history, and take amazing pains to commit to memory a great many dates and lists of kings, with the names of battles and treaties. Such knowledge is very well—only it has no roots. It is fixed and nourished by no personal elements, kept green by no sweet well-spring of emotion. The Highland child sits breathless by the ingle nook to hear his grandfather tell how a certain clan came over the moor to speak to his father's clan. How they met on the very spot where the cattle-house stands now. Is the child likely to forget that event or the date of it? Following the plough one day with his father he finds a silver buckle which once shone on the foot of a gay cavalier, or picks up an old pot which has lain in the earth for a hundred years and is battered with shot. And now he desires to hear the story from his father's lips, and then to read about it in the history-book.

The young Greek learned *his* history from the singer. Song, the language of emotion, was chosen to convey to him the unforgettable story of his nation's heroes' lives and deaths.

So we see that the oral method—speech and song—was the primitive way of teaching history.

"That is true," you cry. "But *we* cannot adopt the oral method. We do not wish to rouse our youths to warlike fury. And besides knowledge has increased, and is always increasing. It must be organised and mastered in a new way. We must have condensed records, lists, dates, etc."

This is reasonable enough. And yet all real success in teaching depends on the teacher's remembrance of origins.

We must not break away the stem, but allow it to grow up from its root in the earth. That is to say, the written words of historians should be as like the spoken word of a close blood-relation as possible. One great modern writer, Ruskin, has written a history in which he seems to speak like a father to the boys and girls of England. Moreover, he calls his History "Our fathers have told us," being under the conviction, apparently, that what our fathers have told us we are not likely to forget. But this history is not much used in our public schools or recommended by examiners.

The rapid increase of knowledge has confused people. They think: "This vast array of new and interesting and important facts must not be ignored. Whatever happens, we must remember everything." And so we are betrayed into regarding the human brain as a receptacle.

And yet the brain is not a receptacle. It is still a living organ. It requires nourishment, and, being nourished, it grows. If too much food is forced on it, it refuses to digest any food at all, and occupies itself almost entirely in getting rid of things. And in this effort it is nearly always very successful. What a number of things learned at schools have we forgotten! How many of us remember *any* of the Latin History, geography, chemistry, etc., we once "got up" in order that we might pass our examinations? Oh, it is undeniable that knowledge has increased. But the laws that govern the development of the human mind remain unchanged. Emotion is still the sustainer of mental as well as of moral life. And voluntary attention, growing out of nothing at all, leaves as little result behind it as ever.

But now suppose that nature rather than the inspector is honoured; that all the opportunities offered by the child's spontaneous attention are turned to account. Suppose that, the child being attracted to animals, history, plants, music, engines, attention to one of these is accepted as his starting-point of growth. What effect can the acceptance of the child, and compliance (as far as possible) with his innate tendency have on his ethical life?

In attempting to answer this question we must begin by pointing out the *general character* of the movements concerned



in involuntary attention. It is not a small portion of the body—an isolated area in the brain—that is active when we spontaneously attend to anything. On the contrary, the whole organism seems to be more or less involved. The respiration deepens; the heart-beat becomes stronger; the motor centres become excited in a peculiar way, and the circulation is powerfully affected. In the brain itself the activity is so rapid and intense that the nervous elements are soon exhausted. *Prolonged* attention is possible, therefore, only through the activity of cells which awake successively (thanks to the general excitement and movement), and take their part in the dance for life. The larger organs are involved. But the *reveille* is sounded, so that even the dormant—the latent—part of the brain awakes. It would be strange if such an extensive and penetrating movement had not important ulterior as well as immediate results.

We cannot penetrate to the living brain. We cannot follow all its processes of growth, nor see how those processes are related to, and accompany, the development of human character. But we know that the developing mind and nervous tissue are related in a very intimate way. Our ancestors spoke contemptuously of matter as being a brutal, base thing. We stand amazed and baffled before it, amazed by its beauty, baffled by its mystery. The most baffling substance of all is, beyond question, the pyramidal cell of the human cortex. We are far from understanding the secrets of its functioning, but the salient features of its structure are familiar to every schoolboy. The body of the cell is approached on one end by the sensory fibre carrying the in-going stimulus, and connected on the other end with the motor fibre which is the pathway of the out-going nerve current. It is easy to believe that a primitive man may be violent, and that a child of primitive type will not hesitate to return a blow. A glance at the extremities of the pyramidal cell shows us the physical basis of this necessity. But the branches that extend on either side of the cell and its extremities suggest new possibilities. What is the function of these outgrowths? It is to touch the branches of neighbouring cells, *to let nervous currents flow from one neuron to another*, so that every cell and branch, with all the memories and

modifying elements which they represent, shall weigh in the delicate balance where the force of an impulse is measured and the quality of an action determined. That is to say, the function of the *outgrowth* is an associative one. Thanks to its countless connecting fibres, the human brain is not merely an organ for the movement of muscle. It is, above all, the organ of judgment, thought, comparison—in short, of all the associative functions. But now let us note this. The collateral branches of the neurons are not always extended in continuous and living contact. In times of *ennui*, fatigue, or restraint, they languish apart. It is only when the vitality is high, when the nervous system is stimulated under the influence of exalting emotion, that the interchange necessary for a higher mental and moral life can take place.

A great deal is said in our day about equality of opportunity. It is well to remember that the hungry, depressed, and inattentive child lacks opportunity. The living tide, on which his primitive will might ride to higher things, never swells. "He is always" (to quote a very expressive Russian proverb) "swimming in shallow water."

And here we must break off to say that thousands of school children cannot attend to anything because they are ill. An immense amount of sin and failure in schools is *entirely the result of disease.* Many children are indolent. In nine cases out of ten the cause of illness is to be found in the languor of the life-processes—slow circulation, poor nutrition, low vitality. Bad temper or passionate fits of anger seemed once to call for punishment. There are two types of angry child —the weak type and the strong. The latter is of the two the greater moral delinquent. And yet the Salpetrière Doctor treats even his fit of anger as a simple nerve crisis, and prescribes for it a dose of potassium bromide, or cold douches. As for the weak type of angry child, ethical training must begin for him in a change of physical condition. Good nutritious food, exercise in the open air, sleep, and play—these are the first conditions of moral as well as physical improvement.

There are diseases which make all moral or mental advance difficult or impossible.



For example: Take the distressing ailment called adenoids. This is very common.

The medical adviser of one large School Board reports that at least five per cent. of all the children in the schools suffer from adenoid growths and nasal obstruction.

Such children are slightly deaf. They appear stupid, and are very inattentive. No wonder. As the breathing is obstructed, the blood is never properly supplied with oxygen. The front lobe of the brain is ill-nourished. Such conditions are prevalent, and yet the obstruction can be easily removed. In a few moments a doctor can perform the simple operation which frees the sufferer. Then lo! a transformation! The child that was once stupid is now bright and eager. He was once perhaps irritable and petulant; now he is cheerful and kind. All teachers testify to the sudden improvement noticeable in children who have been freed from respiratory obstruction. It is clear that in the future the counsel and help of the doctor will be required by the enlightened teacher, and that physiology will become more and more allied with the study of pædagogy.

Health is, then, the first condition. But something more is needed. It is when he is stimulated under the influence of exalting emotion that the healthy child (and therefore the teacher) finds his greatest opportunities.

This stimulating emotion is experienced when the healthy child comes in contact with the things which interest him, and is allowed to occupy himself with these.

Now we have remarked already that the healthy child is continually prompted by all the natural objects around him to touch and observe—and later to compare and investigate. And this means that he is continually tempted to enter upon a more or less intellectual life. This intellectual life is, of course, of a very primitive kind. And yet it tends to subordinate the emotional life and bring it into subjection. For example: Here is a boy called F——. A year or two ago F—— attended a primary school. But he was very passionate, and he paid no attention to his lessons. He is now taught at home. But he spends a great part of his time in making little models of engines, wind-mills, etc. His temper is much

improved. And the explanation of this sudden improvement is not far to seek. Every emotion is accompanied by a flow of blood to the brain. Every intellectual operation is accompanied by a flow of blood to the same organ. When the blood-flow to what we call the higher centres is abundant, it must be withdrawn from the lower. F—— is being disciplined, therefore, by the work he attends to.

Artificial or imposed discipline is a poor thing in comparison. Here nothing is destroyed—it is rather transformed. The child is literally working out his own transformation.

"But," some will object, "though it may be well to find out what a child spontaneously attends to, though it may be well to educate it through this spontaneous attention and the natural discipline of pleasures and rewards, this is surely not enough. Every new acquisition has to be paid for. It is not easy for the passionate child to subdue himself, for the deceitful child to become truthful, for the idle child to become diligent, for the cruel to be kind. Yet diligence, good temper, veracity, and kindness are necessary. Curiosity is not, after all, the emotion to which we can trust for the final acquisition of self-control."

No. Curiosity is the arresting and stimulating emotion which starts us on our intellectual life.

There is another emotion, through the arresting and stimulating power of which the evolution of the social and spiritual life becomes possible.

This emotion is felt by almost every child at a very early age. For at an early age he loves his mother or nurse. This feeling grows in him if it is not checked by brutal treatment. And very soon it begins to make war with primitive impulses and desires.

Perez writes of a very idle child of six, who sat down to the piano of his own free will, and practised for an hour in order that he might be able to play his mother's favourite air. The same child also set himself to learn German in order to please his mother.

Here was a case of real warfare and victory. Such warfare is often carried on (though not quite so brilliantly) in the healthy normal child. It is the strength or weakness of the emotional stimulus that decides the issue.



Not that love for one or several persons can redeem the whole nature. Alas, no! Very affectionate children are often selfish and cruel outside the narrow limits of the home circle. They stop short in their social development almost as soon as they get well started. And why?

Cruelty is significant of an impoverished or immature nature. The child is immature. He understands only a very limited number of states of existence. He loves his mother or nurse, and is much concerned when they suffer. He teases the cat unmercifully. This is partly because he is in great confusion as regards the cat and her place in the world of life. For that matter, he is in some confusion regarding the table and chair. Is it possible that *they* are alive in some mysterious way? It appears as if he almost suspected such to be the case. For if he knocks his head against one or other of them he is enraged, and will even strike the offending object with his little fist. Nevertheless, the cat mews, runs, laps, and is more amusing than the table. So he plays with her, and treats her with as little consideration as if she were the table.

It is plainly the mother and Kindergarten mistress who can bring new light to the child on such matters. They can do this—not by formal teaching—but by introducing the child to the wonders and beauty of animal life. In order to do this one must have sympathy—but sympathy is not enough. One must also have knowledge. Unfortunately the studies of elementary teachers are as yet little differentiated. The mistress takes the same subjects, passes the same examinations, as the teacher of the upper standards. A knowledge of botany and natural history would be priceless to her; yet this she is obliged to forgo, in order to pass in grammar or arithmetic. And this is why she is often obliged to begin her life-work without having obtained just that knowledge and training which would have enabled her to do it efficiently.

The average child is cruel only when he has not been properly introduced to the world of animals.

He is selfish only when he has not been properly introduced to the world of mankind.

Who is to introduce the children of the rich to the children of the poor? Not the parents. For many parents are altogether concerned in keeping them rigidly apart. They fear all manner of evils and dangers to their own well-beloved girls and boys through contact with the lower orders. But all—or nearly all—of these dangers are imaginary or preventable. Dirt and impure air are preventable evils in every school. Let the school authorities provide baths, and make swimming an important grant-earning subject, and impurity will become rare. Children do not love dirt. They hate it. It is strange to see how rapidly, after a little experience of cleanly ways, children begin to loathe impurity. Even vice, as Hugo remarks, takes little hold of them, and from external foulness they escape as soon as the way is opened. The evils and dangers which the well-to-do parent often fears are preventable. Meantime the privation which the well-nurtured boy or girl suffers in being withdrawn from the society of less favoured children is a great and final one, and cannot possibly be made good by any other kind of contact or training whatever.

Some children of well-to-do parents do enjoy the privilege of daily contact with the poor. Helen is the daughter of a tradesman, and attends a school in which some very poor children are pupils. Helen sits beside Betty, for example, who comes to school in wretched boots. Helen learns that Betty is sometimes hungry, and often cold in winter. These facts are depressing, but they are not degrading. And they are true. Their effect on Helen, moreover, is not of a kind to alarm even the tenderest mother. Helen does not exaggerate Betty's sufferings, neither does she under-estimate them. She measures them—understands them—more or less. And she learns how to help Betty, feels instinctively what is to be done. The help she offers is that of one comrade to another; and her nature is not vulgarised by patronage or debased by a sordid form of pity.

Now, if Betty has the good fortune to win a scholarship, and go to a grammar school, she may meet girls who are not so well educated as Helen in some important respects—girls who have heard of poverty, as they have heard of the North Pole,



but who never expected to find it in a neighbour (that is to say, in a person who sat next to them).

And these may ask with significance, "Why is Betty poor?" and "Why is her father a lamplighter?"

Ruskin is right when he says that nearly all evil conduct proceeds from a certain coarseness which prevents the vulgar or coarse person from feeling *with* others. The peremptory fine lady gives imperious orders, or snubs a poor acquaintance. This would be as impossible to a woman of really fine temperament as any more violent kind of aggressive action. It is not impossible to her; for the humiliation of another is not sensed by her. Why then should she hesitate? She is cruel, not because she is ignorant (probably she has had a great deal of instruction), but because she is lacking in susceptibility, in refinement. The most damning charge that can be brought against the education given in our day is that *the poor suffer in our secondary schools.* Impressions of infancy, impressions of childhood, the stimulus and discipline of work, the stimulus and discipline of play, the joys, the sorrows, the lessons and training of home and school should have floated our children forward into a larger consciousness. To be able to feel with others, to sense their fears, nervousness, trouble, and humiliation, and, sensing these, to find the means of removing them, through the same fine tact or touch—these are the crowning gifts, the final evidence of good and high culture.

But in this culture the well-instructed are often yet deficient.

Nor is this surprising.

We are educated primarily through feeling. But many children of the well-instructed have, as we have seen, but slight opportunity for real social development. The poor child who comes to school in broken boots does not sit beside them. They hear of her—which is quite a different thing. They see a picture of her which interests them a little. But the living child is an abstraction. They send money to her—and clothes. They make collections so that she may be looked after when she is ill. But this is second-hand education—an ineffectual thing, quite out of favour now with teachers and scientists. Hearsays of suffering are the pabulum of the sentimentalist.

Yes! Second-hand methods of teaching are condemned, and rightly. "We want," says the modern teacher, "to let the child learn through his own senses; for what he learns in this way is truly learned, and can be had in no other way." This is as true in ethics as in any other subject. A child can arrest and absorb the myriad vibrations of light and colour around him, and therefore he has an artistic sense which may be cultivated. A child can also feel and absorb the yet finer vibrations, of which suffering and rejoicing human hearts are the centres. Therefore he has a social sense which may be cultivated.

But while parents give, or try to give, free opportunities for the development of the artistic sense, they are often careful to prevent all opportunity for the healthy and free development of the other, and so make shipwreck of all.

For the artistic and intellectual powers depend for their nourishment on the resources of the social and sympathetic.

Formal teaching will never take the place of experience.

Susceptibility and human discernment come through contact, and through nothing else.

. . . . . .

As yet nothing of formal ethical training. It will be readily granted that the most forcible ethical training may be given indirectly; that the child learns to be pitiful in the Kindergarten; to tell the truth in the laboratory (scales, test-tubes, etc., being aids to accuracy); and to love his neighbour in the public elementary school class-room and playing-ground. But will not formal ethical teaching supplement all this? And, if so, what kind of formal instruction should be given?

Certainly formal and direct instruction in ethics should at last be given. But as no teachers are altogether alike in character, temperament, and gifts, no hard and fast line can be laid down as to how they should proceed. Personal influence enters as a powerful and inscrutable force. There have been masters whose presence alone raised the tone of every pupil, even though they hardly ever mentioned the word duty, and gave very little direct teaching in ethics.

These were, of course, exceptional persons. It is probable that even they would have done well to give some formal teaching on questions of social and individual conduct.



One thing is certain. The teacher should dwell as little as possible on mere abstractions. Modern science has put within our reach a great many striking facts with regard to the relation of body and mind—facts which even the young can grasp, and which reveal very forcibly (almost without need of comment) the far-reaching character of the issues involved in human conduct. Dotted over our land there are beautiful ruins, which speak to us yet of the life of bygone generations. But there are other temples—temples not made with hands, but very material, which reveal a great deal more. The human brain, the human nervous system, is a more wonderful structure than any church. The living creature helps to shape it—the striving creature to develop it. Its form and even its chemical composition are determined by conduct. The child who learns this for the first time begins to understand the meaning of Right and Wrong in a new way. Nothing can weigh with him so much as the true story of life, for what else is so wonderful and significant? Veiled behind the flesh rises the inner Temple, whose labyrinths of waking cells and interlacing fibres are always adapting themselves to the needs of a larger life. He not only changes the things around him; he himself is changed in working and choosing—is conformed to a finer image or a lower one every day.

Every text-book on neurology bristles with facts which might be used with telling effect by the teacher of ethics. The subtle inter-communication of organs, the permanence of impressions, the faithful record-keeping of the living cells, the demands of exercised muscle and cell, all these are not merely forcible but suggestive truths. They illustrate sharply and clearly the fact that what a man or child sows he will reap. As the pupil grows older, the more stupendous truth will become known to him—that what he sows others must reap.

It is probable that no ethical teaching can be so effectual as that which makes clear to the understanding the real nature and scope of natural penalties and rewards.

For nothing is more dispassionate than nature, or more forcible than truth.



MORAL THEORY AND MORAL PRACTICE

ROBERT ADAMSON

A VERY well-worn and very suggestive question in the past history of Moral Philosophy seems to be forced to the front when any attempt is made to state the general purpose of an Ethical Society and to justify the aims such a society must set before itself. Any statement or justification of the end proposed seems to imply, as one element at least, that discussion of moral ideas and principles, theoretical treatment of moral questions as distinct from the discipline of practice, has a distinct function as an instrument of moral education and a method of moral progress. Such an assumption might appear, *prima facie*, to stand in little need of justification, and to require only qualification against undue extension of it; for it ought hardly to be doubted that the process, familiar to the human mind in the case of all its other problems, of clearing up by thinking out, should find its place within the moral sphere. Yet throughout the history of thinking about moral problems, it will be found that the question as to the exact relation of theory to practice in the moral life, on the solution of which depends any settlement of the claim for theory to recognition as an instrument of moral culture, has been repeatedly raised, and yet remains without a generally accepted answer. Indeed, the question has most often been raised for the purpose only of expressing a doubt as to whether, in the special case of moral culture, there can be any fruitful connection between theory and practice, a doubt so startling as almost to force upon one the conviction that the problem has been wrongly conceived, or



at least that its terms are much more complicated than in similar cases of a distinction between theory and practice.

That there is, indeed, something peculiar in the case of moral theory and practice might be gathered from the consideration that we do not find immediately applicable to it a consideration which helps us in other instances of a distinction between theoretical and practical. In the practical sciences, we acknowledge without difficulty that our command over particular circumstances may be so inadequate that we can only achieve in practice an approximation to what is contemplated by theory. The deepest cause of such divergence, moreover, we take to be the inadequacy of our knowledge; we admit that our theoretical constructions, our judgments on natural processes, may be only approximations to the truth. But we find it difficult to apply this mode of explanation to the sphere of moral action. There is analogy not identity of relation to the intelligent subject, between the intractability of physical matter and the recalcitrancy of humour, impulse, and passion. It is almost impossible to put upon the term "approximation to truth" a meaning that renders it available when applied to the moral life. And it seems an assumption without warrant that the ground or explanation of imperfection in practice, departure from an ideal, is mostly ignorance of particular circumstances. There have indeed been ethical philosophies which proceeded on this assumption, but they have been uniformly admitted, even by their authors, to be inadequate and useless. The Platonic view, a prominent representative of this mode of explanation, has to add to ignorance as the cause of vice another factor, what Plato called *madness*, which no ingenuity could describe as want of knowledge, and, which admitted, seemed to render a symmetrical adjustment of theory and practice impossible. For, in the long run, when the consequences of the admission are developed, it is seen that they involve an ultimate cleavage in moral experience, the distinction of one portion or kind of the moral life, the true life of the soul in its relations to its supernatural correlate, from another portion, the temporal life of ordinary human practice, and that the latter becomes wholly unintelligible.



The very general problem of the relation between theory and practice in the moral life no doubt took its rise from the attempt to solve the special question with which we here connect it, the question as to the appropriate methods for deliberately influencing the development of the moral life. The treatment of such a special question forces back reflection upon problems of a highly abstract kind, which can only be handled in the generalised fashion called philosophical. But clearly in such a regress of reflection there is much danger that features essential to the whole may be omitted or placed in a wrong relation to others. The more complex the experience from which reflection starts, or, in other words, the less our insight into its actual composition and relations, the greater is this danger. We allow for this danger in dealing with external nature; we acknowledge that our first crude experiences give little of firm foundation for reflective treatment; we know that each act of reflection gives added power to those which follow. The same holds good in the moral sphere. Error and misconception are not made impossible, because the experience we start from is some thought or feeling of our own. The simplest treatment of such experience, the description of it, is always difficult, is sometimes impossible. It requires no appeal to unconscious processes of mind to justify the assertion that the individual may be wholly unable to determine the elements of some experience of his own. The general terms he employs to name these elements are few in number and extraordinarily metaphorical. In most cases, they are saturated with assumptions that have undergone no test; they are what the logician calls "question-begging epithets." They are corrupted by theory, even though that theory may have come to the user of them in the secret fashion of history and custom, and be no product of his own reflection.

So far the similarity extends. The difference presents itself in the final relation contemplated; for, in the case of physical research, the clearer, more developed conceptions reached remain the same in kind with the less developed insight from which they proceed; in the case of the construction of a moral theory, as it is called, we seem to have passed into a different sphere. It would be impossible, in the one



case, to accept as having *any* grounds the opinion readily enough advanced in the other, that practice is wholly independent of theory, and that theoretical discussions can contain no influence on the practical side of conduct. Such a difference appears to point to some subtle alteration in the meaning of the term, *theory*, which is applied to both results. It might perhaps occur to one, as a possible explanation, that if, in the case of physical research, the ultimate stage of reflection were held to be reached only when the conception was of the kind commonly called speculative or metaphysical, the difference might disappear. For it seems difficult to maintain that any such speculative conception throws light on the problems of physical research, or stands in any relation to practice in that sphere. It may be, therefore, that in the case of reflection on ethical practice, we rightly or wrongly assume that a *theory* is not reached unless the conception is of the speculative or metaphysical kind; and so, when confronted with the fact that there is no very great agreement about such theory and that humanity has worked on, organising conduct, under a great many different theories, and for the most part without much reference to any of them, we generalise our result in the statement that moral theory and practice are wholly independent of one another.

It is peculiarly fortunate that the first definite discussion of the special question, By what method can we operate on the moral life? should have come forward in conjunction with one of the great representative theories of morality. In Plato's richly dramatic dialogue, the *Protagoras*, the problem comes before us in the definite shape, Can virtue be taught? No modern reader is likely to gain much satisfaction other than artistic from the attempt there made to clear up the "terrible confusion of ideas." He will feel that there is something illusory about the arguments advanced in support of the doctrine that virtue is knowledge, and will, at all events, remain convinced that, whatsoever truth the proposition may contain, the full relation between the two facts, virtue and knowledge, is obscured rather than explained when they are simply identified. The identification has indeed always seemed arbitrary, and that on both sides. On the one hand, as modern criticism has delighted

to point out, the two processes, intellectual knowledge and practical activity, even if they have some common elements, are very distinct from one another, and are capable up to a certain point of quite independent variation and development. On the other hand, if we look to the objects of each, it seems impossible, without confusion of ideas, to identify things known with aims or ends of action. These two seem to stand in quite different relations to us. With respect to the one, the objects of knowledge, we might not perhaps experience any great difficulty in accepting for the moment the Platonic view which gives them the character of absolute unchanging timeless reality, and so separates them wholly from the region of the temporal and transitory. On the other hand, we find an intolerable difficulty when we seek to apply the same distinction in the case of the ends or aims of practical activity. It seems impossible to understand such aims or objects as having the character of absolute timeless reality; and the perplexity which is involved, even on the theoretical side, presses with tenfold force in the region of practice. Historically it is well known how entire is the failure of Plato to express in other than metaphorical terms what he understood by the absolute good. It has not, perhaps, been seen that the same difficulty presents itself, though in another form, in the modern idealistic theory of morals, a theory which, in fact, is but a re-translation of the Platonic.

It would be easy to select from the writings of moralists expressions which more or less pointedly insist on the total severance of theory and practice in the moral life. In most cases, it is true, these expressions require some further treatment in order to make clear their exact purport, and often such clearing up will be found to result in a considerable modification of the opinion expressed, a considerable softening down of extreme opposition. Yet there remains enough of divergent interpretation to make it worth while to follow out one or other of these expressed views in order to make clear the ultimate differences from which they spring. The following, from Mathew Arnold, may serve as a specimen of one typical point of view. "Conduct is really, however men may overlay it with philosophical disquisitions, the simplest thing in



the world. That is to say, it is the simplest thing in the world as far as *understanding* is concerned; as regards *doing*, it is the hardest thing in the world." It is a sufficiently familiar view that Arnold here expresses, but it is obvious that the precise scope of his assertion depends upon the meaning he assigns to the terms, *understanding* one's duty and *doing* one's duty. It is by no means clear from his further remarks that he attaches but one meaning to the important term *understanding* one's duty. One would almost think from what he proceeds to say that understanding one's duty meant, in Arnold's mind, being able to explain by what processes we come to acknowledge a duty, or at least having some theory about these processes. For he goes on to say, "instead of facing this difficulty, men have searched out another with which they occupy themselves by preference — the origin of what is called the moral sense, the genesis and physiology of conscience, and so on." It is doubtful whether many would have interpreted the conflict first referred to as having any reference to the fact that men may have very much the same code of practical ethics, while differing widely as to the psychological analysis of conscience, the will, and so on. The contrast would doubtless have first been interpreted as that most common in our experience, between recognition of a duty and incapacity or reluctance to subject our conduct to it. Undoubtedly it is in this sense that Arnold proceeds to employ his contrast, and the statement quoted from him has special interest, because it implies that while there may be the greatest possible conflict of opinion among theories of or about morality, there is no such conflict as to the substance or content of morality itself. It is assumed that every one is in some way possessed of the knowledge of what his duties are, even though he may be in doubt as to how he comes to know it, and may experience difficulty in conforming his conduct to his knowledge. Can this be accepted as expressing the real relation of these three distinguishable features of our moral life? Is there justification for asserting that somehow the mind (and I suppose that we mean, and ought to say, the mind of the individual) recognises without hesitation what his duty is?



A remark very much in agreement with that just quoted from Matthew Arnold is to be found in Kant. Referring to a review of his book on the foundation of ethics, Kant observes, "A reviewer who wanted to find fault with this work has hit the truth perhaps better than he thought when he says that no new principle of morality is set forth in it, but only a new formula. . . . But who would think of introducing a new principle of all morality and making himself, as it were, the first discoverer of it; just as if all the world before him were ignorant what duty was, or had been in thorough-going error?" It is possible that Kant, in this passage, is contrasting morality, which he takes to be somehow known, with the scientific systematic statement of it. He may purpose to place these in the same relation that theory of knowledge may be thought to hold to actual knowledge. The theory does not create the knowledge, but takes that already for granted, and merely proposes to give it systematic arrangement. It would not be difficult to show that such a relation is in both cases, in the theoretical and in the practical, extremely ambiguous. But however that may be, even though here the term theory is made to bear a somewhat larger meaning than the analysis of conscience to which Arnold reduces it, there remains still the same doubtful assumption that somehow the human mind possesses an adequate apprehension of morality—that is to say, of duties. It may be true that reflection about morality neither creates it nor contributes to extend our insight into it; but, nevertheless, it can hardly be denied that in some way the range of morality, the variety, and therewith, one may say, the gradations of our insight into morality, do veritably undergo change in the course of history. It is only by straining the sense of terms that we can assert, as Kant appears to do, that the world has always known what duty was, or, with Arnold, that conduct is the simplest thing as far as understanding is concerned. History of humanity as a whole, the development of each individual, must suggest rather the opposite view, that the recognition of duty is not always possessed in the same measure, that we are very far from being able at each moment and in each combination of circumstance to understand what our duty is. Our ordinary experience seems certainly to show



us that difficulty does not arise only from the struggle of impulse with recognised duty, but that there is also a real difficulty, which we explain to ourselves, inadequately it may be, by defining it as doubt with respect to what is our duty.

The two views which we have been considering agree so far that they separate the theoretical or philosophical discussion of morality from the knowledge of duty, which again is distinguished from the actual practice of it. It is possible that the question with which, as was said above, any attempt to define the aims of an Ethical Society finds itself confronted, is for the most part that of the relation between the philosophical treatment of moral ideas and moral ideas themselves as knowledge of duty. It is, however, wholly impossible to arrive at any satisfactory solution of that problem so long as we leave in doubt the position of the intermediate element, that which intervenes between ultimate theories of morals and moral practice—what is vaguely called knowledge of morality or of duty. If we assume, with Kant and Arnold, that this knowledge may be taken as complete and possessed by everyone, then it would follow that the theory or any theoretical discussion of moral ideas is unnecessary. For it cannot add to the knowledge possessed, and not much can be made of Kant's appeal to the service that may be rendered, as in mathematics, by a formula. It is in this case as with theories which imply, even if they nowhere explicitly state, that adequate knowledge of duty is always possessed. There ceases to be a question as to the bearing of theory on practice. Every ethical system which has advanced in any one of its forms the doctrine that the human mind possesses some faculty of immediate knowledge of duty or some power of directly apprehending moral truths, does implicitly assert the possession of this adequate knowledge and deny the necessity, as it almost denies the possibility, of any enlightenment of practice from theory. It is, of course, possible to introduce qualifications which should bring the view so stated a little less obviously into conflict with fact. It might be urged, for example, that while we possess an immediate intuitive knowledge of general principles, we may be in doubt as to the application of these principles to practice. We may intuitively apprehend and acknowledge the fundamental laws of



duty, while in doubt as to the mode in which they must under particular circumstances be carried out. Room would thus be left for enlightenment of moral insight from some quarter, and possibly it might then be held that the philosophical explanation of first principles or general laws of duty may be the instrument of enlightenment. But it appears altogether doubtful whether we can accept as possible and legitimate the separation which it is proposed to make between general principles and particular duties, at all events, when that separation is dependent on the view that general principles are intuitively known; and certainly it would not appear as though the philosophical explanation of these general principles could in any way clear up our knowledge of the ways in which they ought to be realised in practice.

In a similar fashion, one must doubt whether the relation of general principle and particular case, where duties are concerned, is properly expressed in what seems to have been Kant's conception of the fundamental moral law. There is no possibility of deducing particular duties from any supreme principle which is taken to be self-evident and is represented without reference to the particulars. The more recent systems of ethics, which have proceeded on the lines of the Kantian doctrine, have fully recognised this impossibility, and do indeed find themselves in some perplexity when they attempt to define the relation between the ideal, which they substitute for the law of duty, and the particular rules of conduct through which the ideal acquires substance. The tendency to consider the problems of ethics from the point of view of the ideal end of action rather than from that of an abstract supreme law of duty, has established itself so firmly in modern ethical inquiries as to determine the general lines of the problem which we are now considering.

It is possible also, I think, to disregard as exaggerations or partial truths certain positions, mainly psychological in nature, from which the problem of theory and practice has often been approached. For example, the old opposition between reason and feeling we are bound now to recognise as an imperfect way of representing a difference in the inner life which undoubtedly has its own importance. Neither reason nor feeling can be supposed to operate as independent



factors in the inner life. Nor ought the singleness of the name we use for each to disguise from us the real complexity and variability of the facts named. Neither, again, can be taken as names for a portion of human life which remains quite unaffected by historical changes. Human reason is no mere abstraction, or power which works by its own energy in the void; it is dependent on concrete material, and names, indeed, a complex attitude of the whole mind rather than a simple operation. Feeling, again, has its character and significance determined by the objects, the relations of human life, in connection with which it arises, and it can in no way be regarded as having an independent place and function in human life. Reason and feeling are not, then, to be wholly severed; just as little can they be wholly identified. There are real differences involved. The ethical system of the Stoics may serve as an illustration of the futile attempt to interpret feeling as reason. It would be difficult, naturally, to find any historical representative of the other extreme which would subordinate reason to feeling, although our ordinary thinking often proceeds as though such subordination were the true relation.

In modern ethics, as a consequence of the change in point of view just referred to, the question what function can theory discharge in regard to conduct becomes at once more definite and more pressing. The place which thinking about the moral end can claim for itself is there more easily determined, and therefore it becomes more necessary to ask in what way and to what extent can theoretical views be supposed to exercise practical influence, and what place can such influence, if it be possible, claim for itself among the other agencies which may be supposed to affect the moral disposition. Are we, for example, to look to clearer insight into the substance of the ideal end of human action as the essential or the most important factor in moral progress? Is it by bringing home to men's minds the scope and range of the demands which the ideal makes upon them, that we may hope to bring their practical consciousness to a higher level of effort, and therewith of achievement? or must the claims of theoretical insight be placed somewhat lower?

The discussion of such a question acquires additional

significance if it be thought that differences in the way of representing the ideal end must affect the moral disposition—that is to say, the general standard of moral endeavour in human life. It may be thought that, according as the ideal is defined in one set of terms rather than another, so, in consequence, will be the keenness of conscience with which the individual contemplates his duty; so will be the extent and range of the duties which he recognises as more or less binding upon him. For example, it may be thought that if the ideal end is defined as the attainment of the greatest possible happiness of the greatest number, there will inevitably follow, from the admitted difficulty of defining and measuring the components of happiness, from the impossibility of fixing in exact terms the conception of a greatest possible quantity, a certain tendency to appeal only to very imperfect facts, to the arrangements of established life. If knowledge of the arrangements of life, on which the happiness of man depends, must be drawn from actual experience, we can expect only to foresee in an imperfect empirical fashion the changes in such arrangements of life by which some addition to the total of happiness may be secured. Such a tentative empirical method may naturally be thought somewhat out of keeping with the characters otherwise acknowledged as attaching to the moral end. Moral theory, from this point of view, would come to resemble the art of legislation; and, while everyone allows that legislative changes have their moral aspect, the process by which they are made seems too casual to commend itself as that of universal application in the moral life. On the other hand, if the ideal end be interpreted in some way as implying a consummation of human nature which goes beyond anything yet known to us, and, moreover, has the mark of perfection or completeness, which is not only a better but a best, then it seems natural to conclude that definition of special moral duties from this point of view, the thinking out of conduct with such an end as its ultimate aim, must exercise an elevating influence on the moral disposition, and must give to the endeavour after moral progress a consistency which is lacking in the more empirical doctrine. It will perhaps be sufficient if we consider the problem with special



reference to this second point of view, that which is commonly called the idealist.

The idealist view, however it may define the ultimate end, has always had to acknowledge the impossibility of delineating that end in other than general outline. In so far, therefore, as the ultimate end completely described is that which corresponds to the complete development of human nature, seeing that it expresses the unfolding of all that human nature is capable of, it expresses at once completed insight and perfect adaptation of motive to insight. I will not ask whether in the idealist method adequate recognition is given to the perplexity into which our intellects are thrown when we are called upon to contemplate, as accomplished fact, this adaptation of motive to insight. The difficulty is a very serious one, and presses on all theories of development, but with special force on those which interpret development as the unfolding of what is already contained in the nature that develops. It can hardly be said that the theory has dealt with this subtle conception in a very satisfying fashion. In some phases of our present-day literature, observers have thought that they were able to detect a certain recrudescence of barbarism, and that in its least admirable forms. In a somewhat similar fashion, it might be thought that we can detect in much modern speculation regarding morality and religion a certain recrudescence of the least admirable forms of the scholastic method of thought. Certainly it goes hard with a reader of the present day to find satisfaction in an effort to establish the reality of the Absolute —that is, of God—on the basis of some subtle analysis of the meaning of a negative proposition. He may be allowed to feel equally uncomfortable when he finds that his ethical theory is made to depend on a highly subtle interpretation of the idea of possibility. "A state of life or consciousness not yet attained by a subject capable of it, in relation to that subject we say actually is not; but if there were no consciousness for which it existed, there would be no sense in saying that in possibility it is, for it would simply be nothing at all." It is undoubtedly difficult to represent this highly abstract argument in a way other than the relatively concrete fashion in which, indeed, the author seems to insist that it



must be interpreted. We must represent this completed possibility as actually forming an object in the consciousness of some perfect subject. All that human nature is capable of, the ideal humanity, so to speak, must therefore be regarded as already achieved, already real, in some other conscious experience, for which, I suppose, we can find no other name than The Divine. Now, even assuming that it is possible intellectually to represent this conception, and I think, as a matter of fact, it is not, we are entitled to ask, in what possible relation does it stand to the actual moral life? Is it to be supposed that the reference in clear thought or in obscure images to a divine consciousness as realising the ideal, is a condition of the existence of morality? Green has conferred no small service on ethical speculation by the definiteness with which he has pointed out that reflective morality, self-conscious morality, pre-supposes always a type of morality more direct, more instinctive, but which, nevertheless, is in no way devoid of the element of obligation, and which is indispensable for the development of the later self-conscious morality. Moreover, it is admitted, it must be admitted, that of this completed possibility we have no representation in detail. Our idea of it is not the idea of a life that is, but rather the idea that there must be such a life—a conception which need not at once be regarded as standing in need of the speculative foundation that is given to it. It may suggest itself, indeed, as a fair question, whether our admitted ignorance of the contents of this best life ought not to compel us to adopt some other conception of its meaning and significance in the moral life. Green's view has a suspicious resemblance to that type of ethical theory which has always striven to connect the fact of moral obligation with the idea of a command proceeding from something higher than human nature. One has an uneasy sense of doubt, in dealing with the idealist doctrine, whether it is in earnest with the conception of morality as the expression in its highest form of human nature. "The moral law will only be able to assert its absolute validity if it springs not out of the thinking of individual men, whether it be my thinking or that of others, but is the revelation of the willing of the universal reason which stands



above all individual wills as their ground, and is at the same time active in them as the common bond of their community."* It can hardly be thought that in order to exercise by thinking any influence at all on moral progress, it is necessary to adopt a point of view from which admittedly no practical consequences can be drawn, and which is in itself full of perplexity for our thinking.

I say no practical consequences can be drawn. I am quite aware that in many cases those who have adopted the idealist's point of view seem to claim for it a more elevating influence than the empirical position is thought capable of asserting for itself; but it is impossible to reconcile any such claim with the admission which is frankly made, and which, I think, cannot be avoided, that in regard to the detail of practical precepts we have no other source than the experience of the actual, than the judgments we can form as to the effect which different institutions of social life have produced, and as to the way in which these varied institutions at present work together in determining the character of social life. If it were supposed that the theoretical view of the final end enabled us to lay before humanity the least item of a new code of rules by which to guide its conduct towards the best, there would be no more to be said, but admittedly no such deduction is possible. "Though statements at once positive and instructive as to the absolutely best life may be beyond our reach, yet by help of mere honest reflection on the evidence of its true vocation, which the human spirit has so far yielded in arts and sciences, in moral and political achievements, we can know enough of a better life than our own, of a better social order than any that now is, to have an available criterion of what is good or bad in law and usage, and in the tendencies of men's actions." This passage, making some allowance for the rather dubious implications of the term *true vocation*, seems to me to place the matter in a just light, and to be entirely independent of any metaphysical or speculative conception as to the relation of human consciousness to a divine or superhuman consciousness. The shadowy representation of the ideal best becomes no longer the confusing idea of a possible life which is already

* Pfleiderer, "Philosophy and Development of Religion," i. 64-5.

completely realised, but a notion of the direction in which the *summum bonum* is to be sought. Now, as it is not maintained that the direction in which the moralising of human conduct has hitherto proceeded has been determined by any preconception of what the ultimate good must be, so I take it, it ought hardly to be maintained that some insight into the direction of such progress is impossible without a knowledge, however lacking in detail, of a pre-determined end.

It is necessary then, it seems to me, to modify somewhat the claim that has been advanced for the superiority of influence capable of being exercised on the moral disposition by the adoption of the idealist point of view. Such superiority can only attach to a point of view which is able to give relatively fuller consideration to all the complex elements which actually enter into the moral life, and which is able, therefore, both to point out the improvements in detail that are required, and the way in which, by such modifications in detail, a greater unity and harmony of the moral life itself may be attained. In other words, as I understand it, the difference on which Green has dwelt in the influences capable of being exercised by ethics of the empirical or of the idealist type depends on the greater or less success with which the rival theories include in their account what is actually of significance in the moral life and place these parts in their due relation to one another. If it can be shown, as Green, for example, thinks he can show, that the utilitarian is bound to fall into confusion when he attempts to work together the notions of individual satisfaction and common good, this indicates only an imperfect grasp on the part of the utilitarian of what are really motives in the practical life. Any theory, any attempt to reduce to general notions such a complicated reality as the moral life, may always find itself in difficulties owing in part to oversight of essential particulars, in part to the poverty or inadequacy of the general notions it employs. It is a fair question of argument between two rival theories of the moral, which of them has been the more successful in representing the real structure of the moral life; and criticism which proceeds by showing that the general principles of a theory lead to conflict with fact or to some inconsistency among themselves is thoroughly justified.



There is no reason why, in the description of the moral life, there should not be included and taken into account that tendency to interpret the moral law as a command proceeding from a superhuman source of authority, which has manifested itself in history in conjunction with the most diverse conceptions of the superhuman; but at the same time it must be maintained that this is only a part of the descriptive work, and that by means of such reference nothing is contributed to the actual contents of morality.

In both cases, in the utilitarian and in the idealist theories, one seems justified in regarding the final end as in its representation derivative and relative. General happiness is obviously so. Apart from other difficulties in the idea, it must be admitted that the only way in which we can form the notion of greatest possible happiness is by bringing together and taking collectively the elements of such happiness as experience has yielded. The components of happiness and their values are never constant. In the same way the conception of a perfectly developed human life, one in which opportunity is given for the unfolding of every human capacity, can be represented by us not in its final completeness, but comparatively by taking into consideration the data of experience. In neither case does the conception of the final end, whether greatest general happiness or perfection of human nature, furnish any concrete information for the guidance of human conduct or for the modification of human character. It is impossible to apply within the realm of practice the method of deducing from a general principle, and this holds good whether the general principle be supposed to be given in some original fashion or to be gathered from experience. That unity in the representation of moral life, which Kant claimed to give by his new formula, is not to be interpreted as a final source from which the rules regulating the moral life are to be drawn. It is a formal unity only—that is to say, it does not go beyond the material which it serves to bind together. In the same way the general principle from which Mr Spencer seemed to hope that much of absolute value might be drawn with regard to special duties, but from which his further investigations showed



him that little was to be gained, though a principle based on experience, is likewise the expression of a formal unity. There is something almost pathetic in Mr Spencer's expression of regretful astonishment that so little could be deduced in ethics from the general conception of development in the moral life. The relation between a theoretical conception which gives a certain unity to a complex whole and the parts of that whole is evidently not one which allows of the application of deduction.

We seem now to have reached a point at which the ignorance which we incline to allow as being certainly a component of the moral life assumes a new and suggestive character. Not only must it be admitted that the individual may be perplexed, may be in ignorance when confronted with the demands of immediate duty; not only may he also be perplexed with regard to the range of application throughout the social life of a law of duty about which he is clearer in mind in his individual case; but it seems necessary to allow that with respect to the final ruling conception expressed in the ideal he forms of the best moral life there is an element of imperfect knowledge—that is to say, of ignorance. The first variety is perhaps the most familiar to us. Casuistry has sprung into existence in order to meet the difficulties arising from it. In practice, and within the range of the individual's direct action, the possibility of a conflict of duties must be allowed. There, too, must be acknowledged a recognition of degrees of obligation applying both to the personal agents, whose character and circumstances we regard as affecting the degree of obligation, and also to the duties themselves, which certainly, as nearer or further, as more or less pressing, and as having possibly a limit, exhibit the same character of indeterminateness, and therefore offer a place for ignorance. So, too, when the ideas of duties are generalised, are taken with reference to their manifestation in social life, we find the same indeterminateness—the same room for ignorance. Can it be doubted, for example, that practically in our estimates of personal morality, we are staggered and confused by the intrusion of the element of variable station? We doubt whether the same ideal of morality is applicable without



respect of person. Does anyone think that there is no difficulty for the individual in adjusting the claims of duty when they concern, on the one hand, the narrower sphere of individual personal action, and, on the other hand, action within the larger spheres of industry and politics? It would be a total mistake to explain the undoubted divergence between the moral codes in such cases—for example, between a man's punctiliousness in personal relations and what is called taking advantage of the circumstances of economic competition—by referring to the influence of overwhelming desire. Many honest and upright men are perplexed and puzzled to a degree by the impossibility of making quite clear to themselves what is the line of duty incumbent on them in such cases. So I should say it would be equally absurd to explain the undoubted conflict of moral ideas which is present in the civilised nation as to war by reference merely to the influence of greed or pride or passion. There is a real perplexity, indicating an inability to bring conflicting ideals into any kind of harmony.

It has sometimes been thought that a solution of these problems may be had by taking into account not duties directly, but what corresponds to them in character—that is to say, moral dispositions. Thus it would be argued that, while there may be difficulties with regard to the precise range of a duty, while we may be perplexed as to what it is that constitutes honesty in personal, economical and political transactions, there can be no doubt and no indefiniteness about the scope of the requirement to cultivate the virtue, the moral disposition of honesty. The scope of a command—let this or that be done—may have indefiniteness, because all action falls within the realm of chance circumstance and may have conditions and consequences not contemplated in its formula; but, on the other hand, the moral disposition is free from such contingency; it lies within the individual mind. The injunction, *Be this or that*, has no indefiniteness. I suppose that in this way there would also be sought some explanation of the remarkable discrepancy between the Christian code of morals and the actual practice of Christian communities. The discrepancy can hardly be denied, but it may be explained by insisting that

the Christian teaching relates primarily to the formation of character; that it inculcates dispositions from which, if due opportunity be furnished, the duly conforming type of action would follow. It need hardly be pointed out how wide a field this explanation, if accepted, would yield for that most common weakness of human nature, self-deception. To suppose it possible that a human character can be moulded into the Christian dispositions and excellences of character, while it develops in and among institutions of life admittedly not framed upon the Christian model or adjusted to it, is to put at defiance all that we know of the interdependence of character and circumstance. Dispositions, and the objective counterparts of them, acknowledged modes of life, must always go together, and neither can be understood in separation from the other. There is something almost absurd in the supposition that a man should know what the disposition to be honest is and means, that he should accept as an ideal towards which to strive the perfecting of this disposition in himself, while at the same time he should be unable to determine what kinds of action correspond to this definition or should contentedly acquiesce in social institutions which he cannot recognise as in harmony with it. Moreover, if we turn to the other type of perplexity, the conflict of ideals, we shall find that just as little help is given in solving the difficulty by taking dispositions or excellences as our material. Does anyone suppose that it is impossible for the individual to find two types of inner excellence, of virtuous disposition, in conflict, just as he finds two general principles of action or ideals of conduct in conflict? Experience abundantly shows us that one moral disposition may be so cultivated as to render it difficult for the individual to give its due place to others that are equally necessary. The very conception of moral life as a whole made up of parts, makes it certain that difficulties will be encountered in adjusting the relative proportion of these parts. Taken altogether, then, it is a necessary consequence of the general principle that character and action are interdependent, that what we have called ignorance should manifest itself on one side as on the other.

On the other hand, the ignorance which we have seen must



be admitted with respect to the final conception, that of the absolute good or best, is of a totally different kind. We have already concluded, we have seen it to be admitted, that the representation of a best life, however that may be defined, whether as perfection or as general happiness, is, in fact, a collective notion gained by comparison. It is from a survey of what already has been achieved by the institutions and rules of life that we can fashion any picture of a better organisation than the actual. In the framing of this picture, moreover, as we have seen, no definite feature is supplied from the very abstract conception of an absolute best. It would appear to follow, then, that there is something quite peculiar about this conception of the absolute best; it does not stand, as one might at first imagine, as, so to speak, the last of a series of representations, summing up and comprehending all that has gone before; it is not a representation the same in kind with the others. Probably it is with some such meaning that the idealist view describes it not as an idea of the best life but as a notion of the direction in which that best life is to be sought. In like fashion, I suppose, the utilitarian doctrine might treat the conception of the greatest possible happiness of the greatest number not as a representation which we can make definite, but as a notion of the direction in which right action must tend, and therefore as supplying a convenient test of the merits of any suggested change. So, finally, the scientific conception of the moral life, as having its final end in the perfect adjustment of inner character to outer circumstance, might be interpreted not as the impossible picture of such a life in its details but as a general direction and a convenient test.

The question which these considerations suggest is one of the most subtle in ethical theory; while at the same time on the answer to it depend important practical consequences, particularly as regards the problem we started with, that respecting the method of consciously operating on the moral life. The short and decisive way in which Aristotle cuts the knot when beginning his ethical theory has always interested me. There must be an absolute end, he seems to say, for, otherwise, we should be endlessly desiring one thing on

account of another, and this seems to him absurd. But it is worth while raising the question whether this short method is really decisive. No one can admit its validity who at the same time contends that we do not know what the absolutely best is; for, if it be absurd to suppose that we could go on endlessly desiring one thing on account of another, it would be equally absurd to suppose that our desiring should find its termination before a blank, or should be satisfied by the abstract statement that there must be something that would give complete satisfaction, though we do not know what it is. It is quite possible that Aristotle's short method attains apparent success only by mixing up quite illegitimately certain hypotheses about desire with the very abstract conception of an endless progress. Most modern moralists, perhaps without conscious reference to the difficulty here suggested, content themselves with a well or ill-grounded imitation of the practice of the Stoic philosopher. They call a halt at a certain point. Mr Sidgwick, for example, who is thoroughly alive to the treacherous character of the notions of desiring and desirable, calls his halt, as I understand him, at certain objective judgments of right. These are in themselves final, so far as the theoretical representations of a moral best are concerned. It is from another side altogether, from the consideration of the correspondence between virtue and happiness, that Mr Sidgwick approaches one side of the perplexity involved in Aristotle's method of dealing with the absolute end. Other moralists make their halt at judgments either of absolute value or of a scale of values, in either case avoiding or evading the perplexity into which the conception of an absolute end in life must lead.

As the perplexity cannot be evaded in this fashion when morality is regarded as having its roots in human nature, as an expression of relations among the facts of human nature, and as having neither reference to nor dependence on anything outside the empirical life of the human being, it is fair to ask whether it is necessary to allow that the distinction between good and better can only be drawn by a mind which at the same time has, in some way or other, the con-



ception of a best. For it may be that in developing the answer to this question we may gain some light on the undoubtedly peculiar position which the idea of the absolutely best occupies in our reflection. Let it be observed that what is called by us, as by the idealist ethics, *moral good*, the conception of a mode of life as that which is to be adopted because it is good, pre-supposes a stage of organisation of life, of selection of modes of action, in which there is the distinction of good and bad, but without the special characteristic of *moral*. That characteristic, then, is added to what is first accepted as good, and it must express, therefore, a certain complex of thought and feeling in the individual mind. So far from it being impossible that the history of this added element should be given in terms going in no way beyond the scope of human reflection on its experience, it seems necessary that it should be so given. No extra-natural reference can come forward, except on the basis of distinctions actually recognised in natural experience. He who thinks the will of the gods needful to give force to any altruistic motive, has already found that motive in himself and approved it. If so, the special character of the addition made would itself constitute the meaning of moral good for us, and such meaning would be altogether independent of any conception which further reflection might lead one to form of the general tendency of human development—that is, of its final end. In a similar fashion it does not appear impossible that where there is a natural distinction between good and bad, there should be an equally natural distinction between good and better. It will hardly be claimed that the simple primitive distinction of natural good from bad requires any representation of an absolute best, even if that best were natural. In the same way it may be argued that the distinction between morally good and morally better is possible, and capable of expression in terms of human experience, without necessary reference to the conception of an absolute best. The metaphor of direction ought not to be allowed to deceive us. Certainly the argument from it, which, I suppose, would be fashioned on Aristotle's, that we cannot determine direction except in reference

to its aim, can hardly be pressed by anyone who allows that the aim is, and must be, beyond our powers of representation. For this is only to say that our notion of the tendency towards the final end is the representation of the order of change, such as we have discovered it, from good to better, with the conviction that further progress will be of the same kind. If this view were taken, we should find it possible to explain why it is that the definition or representation of the absolute best should always be beyond our reach, and also to explain why the ideal we do form, and use as a guide to practice, should always have about it an element of indeterminateness, almost of incoherence.

In the position we have reached there is certainly something paradoxical, and I suppose that the argument about the impossibility of an endless series of desires will always present the same baffling aspect as the old Eleatic puzzles about motion, with which, indeed, it is in principle identical. It will be insisted that the notions of *end* and *ideal* are essential elements in the moral consciousness. It will be urged that to substitute for the conception of an absolutely good—a conception which carries in it the indefeasible claim to have human actions subordinated to it and controlled by it, the representation of a relatively better, which is but an empirically gathered collective idea, and which, as being based merely on the achievements of the past, contains nothing to draw humanity beyond itself, is to destroy all that is most characteristic in the features of the moral life. A naturalist ethics seems to lack the stimulating and elevating power of the idealist view, and may even be thought to rest in the long run on passions fatal to the spiritual life of man.

I am much more convinced of the confusion of our ideas regarding these topics than of the satisfactoriness of any solution one can give of even the minor difficulties. In face of so complicated a material, the last position one would assume would be the dogmatic. Yet it does appear to me that many of the arguments and their implications, just referred to, go wide of the mark, and seem to have pertinence only by reason of the fringe of indeterminateness that surrounds all our general ideas on moral relations. The one fate which the



human being cannot escape is that of thinking about his experience, and he can think only by general notions, and by reducing, with the help of these notions, the vague mass of his experience to a unity that resembles, as it is based on, the unity of his own existence. And he is easily satisfied. He will contentedly use words—that is, general ideas—with the vaguest sense of their full significance, and with perfect belief in the haphazard picture of real things which they suggest to him. So, in moral experience, the general ideas of moral qualities and relations are but faint symbols of the complicated and ill-understood experience expressed by them, and may suggest an altogether fanciful picture of the real life underneath, a picture in which the thinker may most devoutly believe, but of whose exactitude the intensity of his conviction is no guarantee. No one would propose to banish the notions of *end* and *ideal* from the moral life; what must be avoided, ejected even, are the illegitimate implications which these generalised thoughts carry with them. *End*, if I use the familiar jargon, is a wholly practical category; it has meaning only in the relations of action under feeling or thought. If, then, I make abstraction of these conditions, if I take human life as a whole, the life of humanity, and place over against that a hypothetical end, which I seek vainly to determine, the failure is not due to lack of an insight which we may hope to reach, but to the quite illegitimate extension which I have given to the notion of *end*. I have transferred it to a sphere in which it has no application and no significance, nor need it surprise one to find that such transference is invariably mediated by the conception, however disguised in philosophical terms, of a life in which human life is contained as a subordinate part, and for which, therefore, an end may be supposed to which human life is a means. In the long run, the question as to the legitimacy of the conception of an absolute end runs back into that of the right to postulate an absolute mind. It is the great merit of Green's work in ethics, as I understand it, that he has made clear this point of method, though I do not think he has been successful in avoiding the contradiction involved in the conception of an end which is at once *in* and *for* an absolute mind, *for* but not *in* the finite mind.

As to the question of *ideal*, there is hardly room for argument. All our thinking is idealising. Ideals are in no way peculiar to the moral life, and, except on the ground that all thinking, nay, all psychical life, must be called non-natural, I cannot understand why the admission of the obvious fact that we control and organise conduct by reference to ideals should be held to constitute a difficulty for that type of ethical theory which calls itself naturalist. If there be any difficulty, it must depend not on the existence of ideal conceptions, but on the peculiarity of their contents.

But the contents, it will be urged, cannot be gathered merely from reflection on the past. History cannot take the place of morality. Assuredly; but there is no reason why we should misconceive our relation to the historical. Why should we represent ourselves as but empty vessels, to be filled only from the fruits of the life of the past? Do we ever really think, *e.g.*, that the superstitions which we dub revivals are just transported from the past into the otherwise void consciousness of the present? The slightest consideration is enough to dispel such a mode of explanation. The crassest superstition of the past lives in us, because we are in essentials of like mind with those of the past who first symbolised in that grotesque shape their vague and fleeting experiences. We are ready and able to express ourselves in similarly meaningless or meaningful symbols, and to take from the past what is thoroughly congenial to us. Even that least personal of our heritages, language, we do not simply accept. We assimilate it, because we have, and have in intenser mode, the activities which gave it origin. We are not passive, but active in regard to it.

The point does not require to be laboured. Our moral ideas and ideals are indeed based upon the past, but they are handled in relation to the present, and they have significance because we, the moral agents, are in essentials constructed as they were who first elaborated the simpler forms of morality. Of such progress as they were capable, we too are capable, and for the same reasons. The inadequacy of their moral generalisations finds its parallel in our own experience and for the same grounds.

By "inadequacy of a moral generalisation" is meant the



obvious fact that a distinction of moral quality, a distinction of good and better, may be drawn—indeed, for the most part is drawn—within a limited range of experience, and that even within that range what is discriminated may be very imperfectly understood. It points, therefore, directly to the problem that has been occupying us. Why is it that we should, on the whole, feel such confidence about the abstract ideas in which we sum up a certain amount of moral distinction, while we acknowledge the difficulty and perplexity into which we are thrown when we try to develop the consequences of the distinctions involved, or, in other words, to extend the notion? Most of us feel quite clear about the distinction between justice and injustice. We even think we could define these abstractions. Many of us feel great perplexity in doing what the logicians call, subsuming new cases under them. If so, then I fear that the Socratic dialectic would make short work of our claim to knowledge. Nor would any escape be possible, were we to attempt the path already noted, to transfer our certainty from knowledge to feeling; to claim possession of just disposition, while ignorant of the lines of action in which that would find expression. The Christian moralist, who, with a confidence that is astounding, in face of the welter of confusion about moral principles which the practice of the civilised world discloses, continues to claim, explicitly or implicitly, possession of the complete key to moral knowledge, is more astonishing than encouraging. One would be grateful for any concrete picture of the mode of life, the organisation of society, which should give definiteness to the abstractions of principle. Few, probably, would accept one form of such a picture, that in which the principle, if carried out, involves abnegation of all the results of civilisation, a state of angelic barbarism hardly realised in the past even by those hypothetical characters, the primitive Christians. More often the assertion would be advanced that the Christian principle lies at the root of Western civilisation, an assertion which leaves everything in convenient darkness. "Christianity has conquered the world," it is said. On purely historical grounds, one would be inclined to say that the world had conquered Christianity. But whichever be the truth, there

remains the acknowledged want of any delineation, from the point of view of Christian principle, of the structure of society wherein that principle finds adequate development. It is impossible to remain content with the half-hearted view that "it was the object of Christ to lay down great eternal principles, but not to disturb the bases and revolutionise the institutions, as well as all the inevitable conditions, of social life."

That we give to our ideal representation of a life better than experience has yet disclosed, the form of unity admits of no doubt. Just as certain is it that no more equivocal term than unity plays its part in our thinking. Unity is in all cases a relative notion, and in each case the unity represented has to be determined by reference to the material which is said to be unified. In the life of mind, moreover, whether on its theoretical or on its practical side, such unity as enters in has invariably a double reference; there is unity of the inner side correlated with or corresponding to unity of the outer, or, as we may call it, the objective side. The unity of thought has for its correlate the generalised representation of an orderly systematic nature, and that representation is itself gradually formed by idealising the empirical detail which has been mastered. The idea of system has no absoluteness; its value depends wholly on its contents, and these are the general relations experience has enabled us to establish or to conjecture. How empirical such theoretical ideals are, we may readily convince ourselves by attending to their historical development, by noting how dependent they are on vague analogies, and with how little confidence we can accept them as more than constructive hypotheses. Nature is not less a system to the untutored savage than to the modern savant. The difference is that the ideal of the one is based on a few first crude experiences, and breaks down in the effort to apply it as universal explanation, while that of the other sums up a long past of thought and serves up to a certain point as a satisfactory reason for what happens. Yet, who would say that the form of the latter is final? So, on the practical side, the ideal is necessarily that of a mode of practical life, just as it is that of the arrangement of objective facts on the theoretical, and it corresponds to a

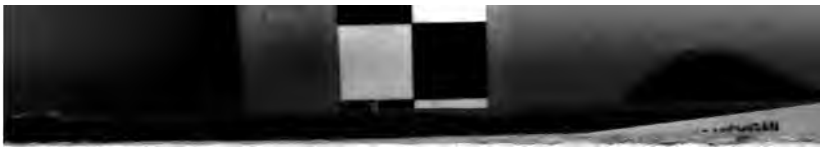


certain mode of practical or moral consciousness, just as the other corresponds to organised thinking. Suppose that its generalised form for the developed modern civilisation be that of a common life under rational law, the analogue of that species of orderly existence, the community or state, which has proved itself of greatest efficacy as a means of maintaining and promoting human welfare, the contents of that ideal must still be given by the empirical factor, by knowledge of what has actually contributed in the past towards the same end.

These very abstract discussions enable a certain answer to be given to the question with which we started. Moral theory, in the sense in which Arnold seemed to define it, in the sense in which it is too often understood, as a discussion of the psychology of the moral consciousness, can be of as little service to practical morality as Arnold held. Moral theory as the statement of an absolute end towards which humanity from its inherent nature tends, must tend, or ought to tend, is equally useless, or rather is impossible. Moral theory as a discussion of such abstract notions as justice, veracity, and the like, is of doubtful practical utility, merely because its invincible tendency is to remain within the abstract. These notions must be *realised* before any treatment of them can have even speculative value. It is of no service to discuss the objective worth of the law of justice, unless we represent in some concrete detail what these courses of conduct are which we designate just. There is a most notable discrepancy between the clear incisive handling of the abstract notions in a systematic ethics and the obscure feeble utterances it intends on concrete questions. It may gratify the logical instinct to hear that the state is the objectification of reason, and that its structure is that of reason, but it is less satisfactory to learn that war is needed to prevent civic ossification and is often useful as diverting the civic mind from private problems. The first may sound like the large utterance of universal mind; the other is suspiciously like the crude expression of private unregenerate feeling. Ethical philosophy of the systematising type must look with a sense of shame if not of bewilderment on the antinomy of private and international morality.

On the other hand, the most empirical mode of representing the moral ideal, even if it tends to abate some exaggerated and ill-founded expectations, enables a truer determination to be reached of the relation between theory and practice in morals. The true and valuable theoretical discussion of an ethical notion is concrete in character, based on a consideration of the way in which the ideas and feelings it summarises have operated when carried out in action upon human life, and on the attempt to follow out in strictly logical fashion the possible effects of modification either in the inner disposition or in the complex of interchanging relations in which that must be displayed. There is no *a priori* method applicable to the tangled web of circumstance in human life. A moral ideal is not the symbol of a mere afflatus of moral emotions, but the representation of a highly involved set of human relations, on which only experience of the actual and skill in eliminating the unimportant can enable a judgment to be formed. Whoever regards the moral code, with its accompanying sentiments and judgments, not as a supernatural gift, but as the natural product of the human factors which lie at the root of all change in life, and there is no other opposition of view in philosophical ethics, must regard the improvement of practice as essentially dependent on theory or knowledge. The Platonic or Socratic maxim that virtue is knowledge is indeed inadequate, but only because of the material implication; only because there was involved in that maxim a special view of the object to be known. Knowledge is not form merely, though even on that assumption its significance for practice might be defended, for it is the form in which human consciousness most clearly expresses itself, the way in which thought attains completion. But knowing can never be separated from its concrete material, and in that intimate union it is not the inevitable mode of organising or systematising experience.

It is perhaps in the familiar severance of knowledge from practice, a severance altogether illegitimate, that there may be found the root of that paradoxical opposition between theoretical acknowledgment of a law and reluctance to con-



form to it which has always exercised moralists. Human thinking has no royal road to morality. If the race is but slowly moralising itself, it is inevitable that the individual's moral notions should be largely abstract, devoid of the full concreteness of content that would come from a larger power of thought and insight. Thinking is not a process that can be isolated from the content of the inner life. That it should appear in more or less close dependence on appetite and feeling, and but gradually and imperfectly obtain control over these, is the analogue in the individual soul of the slow, halting progress of morality in the race. It is of extreme importance to bear in mind how small relatively is the function of thought, how indirect its operation on the actual course of individual life. Strata upon strata, from acquired habit, through deep-seated hereditary instincts down to the vital energies of the body, lie underneath the clearer, thinner atmosphere of thinking, and he is a poor psychologist who does not recognise the enduring influence of these lower layers. Nay, even in what we call the thoughts of an individual, how little there is due to definite reflection, how much is custom and the unconscious result of the pursuit of circumstance.

What is true of the individual holds good, with no important qualification, of the community, for these are inseparables. In this also, ethical notions—for I call the ideas of law, political forms, and national aspirations, ethical—are throughout concrete and determinable only by empirical methods. There is no royal *a priori* method by which we can deduce a form of constitution from the supreme ideal of life. Each has to be considered on its own merits as a way in which humanity has tried or may try to carry on its business of conjoint life. Democracy or Aristocracy, each must be taken as a definable method of organising the national life, as a form of government, with a history from which something may be gathered, with a general nature from which something may be conjectured. And to all such forms of government there must be applied the reflection made on individual life. Just in so far as they express and embody the more abstract determinations of thought, they may tend

to fall out of accord with the deeper lying strata of customary feeling and action by which the collective mind is most influenced, and so far they express ignorance rather than knowledge. The standard by which they are to be criticised is undoubtedly the ethical; but the ethical taken in its large and concrete sense.



LITERATURE AND LIFE

CHRISTIAN COLLIN

I

WHO would care for literature, if he could read the Book of Life in the original text? But for each of us it is opened only at a random page, where our own little person appears, in the middle of a chapter, to disappear in the same or a following chapter, while the story goes on without break.

Not unlike the fragment of a novel, picked up in a stray number of a newspaper: "To be continued" in a following number. Yes; but that number will be read by a following generation!

The hieroglyphic text is marvellously vivid, with moving figures, but not easy to decipher by means of our little human key. How many thousands of years it has taken to grasp the fact that the sun does not stand for a shooter of golden shafts and a charioteer, but rather for a flying juggler keeping hundreds of balls spinning round him in space, himself, in truth, no more than a lifeless ball, though huger and more fiery than the others!

Life is simply unique as a story-teller, but perhaps a little apt to lose itself in long digressions, to explore many a curious wrong track, and map out in detail the roads to ruin. Life is fond of parentheses within parentheses. It has thousands upon thousands of years to spend. But we, unfortunately, have not always the time to wait for a full stop, being liable to die in the middle of a parenthesis.

Life is a poet, and Shakespeare himself is poor compared with life's wealth of vivid images. But *we* are these same vivid



images. And it often makes our bones and our souls ache to illustrate the august laws of life.

Shakespeare modestly laughs at his own attempt to compete with the art of life:

> "Can this cock-pit hold
> The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?"
> . . . . . .
> "I humbly pray (you) to admit the excuse
> Of time, of numbers and due course of things
> Which can not in their huge and proper life
> Be here presented."
>
> "King Henry the Fifth."

But the wooden oval of Shakespeare's little Globe theatre was infinitely more suited to our human power of vision than the world globe, "whose centre is everywhere, its circumference nowhere."

Science has a manly passion for revealing the inhuman monstrosity of space and time. Astronomy and Geology are millionaires, never tired of increasing and counting their ciphers. Zoology, too, is insatiable, especially after having discovered the endless riches of the realm of microbes.

The real world is getting too large, and yet too crowded. At the banquet of life we are beginning to doubt whether the party was meant to be given for our sake. The hostess has invited so many guests whom we scarcely know, or wish to be introduced to.

The most uncomfortable truth which the men of science have treasured, is the enormous length during which the feast has been going on, before we arrived; and the enormous length of time during which it will continue after we have left. I understand that Helmholtz has calculated that the sun, our sun, has light enough left for another nineteen million years. *Our* sun, to be sure!

While science has thus been making a fortune by extending Space and Time, and by always increasing their population, the poets seem to have been doing their utmost to make the world small enough for human habitation. Shakespeare



boldly compresses the hundred years' war into a series of short afternoon hours,

> "jumping o'er times,
> Turning the accomplishment of many years
> Into an hour-glass."
>
> "King Henry the Fifth."

Foreshortening is our only weapon of defence against the enormity of Time and Space. To Wordsworth, in *The Excursion*, the universe is a shell, which he applies to his ear, like a curious child. And his countenance brightens with joy; for from within are heard murmurings as from a great ocean—

> "Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
> And central peace, subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation."

The whole world of Newton's and Herschel's science is to the poet merely a sea-shell, through which he hears the calm pulse of a greater and more living reality!

Another poet, striding the cloud, laughs to see the stars "whirl and flee, like a swarm of golden bees" (Shelley, in *The Cloud*). To the same singer the heaven of astronomy is only "the portal of the grave," the vestibule of some greater world.

To Shakespeare's Prospero, life, with all its splendid scenery and all its actors, is a transient play or pageant:

> "The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind."

These utterances from the lips of three of the greatest English poets are doubly significant. When the reality of facts grows too large or too obtrusive, the poet-sages make free to reduce it, by some bold miniature image, to a shell or a stage—nay, to reduce it still more effectively, by looking beyond Great Reality to some Greater Reality.

Thus science and poetry seem to be at war, the one extending and the other foreshortening the empirical world. But the curious thing is, that the poet, while reducing, at the same time enormously widens the world. And the scientist,

while enormously extending reality, at the same time foreshortens by means of general terms and ciphers. Before the wonderful instrument of mathematical figures, the visible world seems to shrink and to become easy to handle, however huge. By figures the fiery stars have been stringed together and leashed by Newton, the tamer of monsters. The moving hosts of heaven seem to dance to the tune of a magic formula or "law."

It is evident that the insatiable passion for widening the realm of facts is bound up with the enormous foreshortening power of scientific generalisations. There was nothing appalling to Linnæus in the countless number and strange mixture of guests at the banquet of life. The myriad millions of animals and plants, as they came within sight, arranged themselves in perspicuous order, and penned themselves up in a well-partitioned system, as disciplined and docile as when they first presented themselves to Adam to be labelled with names.

Poetry and science are, perhaps, not so very different after all. Both are equally bent upon widening, and at the same time foreshortening, the world. Both are eager to add new provinces, only so far as they can reduce them to human measures. It may be doubted whether mathematical figures are not even more effective foreshorteners than poetical figures. If a poet can see more vividly through a metaphor, a man of science can see more accurately through a formula. Neither will allow himself to be shut up within the little fragment of a chapter, assigned to him in the book of life. Scientist and artist alike look before and after, and strive to live resolutely in the whole, in the words of Goethe. Where did Shakespeare live? in what age or country? He lived through many generations of men, like the old Hebrew patriarchs, and in many countries, to boot. It is true that he drew the tether of his own Elizabethan England, or even of his Stratford home, along with him to Italy and Denmark, or to ancient Rome. But with what an enormous stretch of the tether! When the poet returned from Prospero's enchanted island, after having thrown his magic book into the sea, he, no less than Francis Drake, was a circumnavigator of the globe. Like Ulysses, he



had been blown off to distant lands, and had felt the sailor's longing for home and rest.

But even Shakespeare, though "jumping o'er times," was timid, compared with an age of more childish faith. Dramatic art had grown bashful since the heighday of the great miracle-plays, wheeling about on scaffolds the world's history from creation till doomsday; thousands of years of divine, human, and diabolical deeds, compressed within a few eventful days. The daring craftsmen of the fourteenth century, conquerors at Crécy and Poitiers, wanted to overlook the world-drama—nay, to act it over again from beginning to end.

Science may laugh at the attempt, and yet be proud to feel itself impelled by a kindred passion. Darwin's "Origin of Species" and "Descent of Man" open up a far longer vista of creation and doom, the one intertwined with the other, the doom of the unfit serving, and darkly shadowing, the work of progressive creation. We of the present age seem to have seen the weird sisters, Life and Death, working at their huge cross-stitch canvas, in bright colours and black. However blurred and bloodless the vision of millions of struggling lives, when looked at through these general laws, the spectacle, nevertheless, has wrought itself deeply into the soul of the nations. To all those who have seen it, the world is no longer the same as before.

More long-sighted still, Mr Herbert Spencer, after politely bowing "the Absolute" out of sight on the very threshold of his great synthetic structure, has attempted to build up in stubborn abstractions a framework of the whole knowable world, and its history from everlasting to everlasting. From a comparatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, to a definite, coherent heterogeneity, and back again into homogeneous chaos—such is the great tide of evolution and dissolution, the rhythmic pulse of the knowable universe.

I am not sure whether this great generalisation gives altogether a truer view of the world-drama than the medieval miracle-plays. But both of them surely bear witness to the ever-changing, ever-glorious revolt of the human mind against being shut up within a single chapter of the story of life.

It may seem disheartening, if we have to accept the



Spencerian outlook of an endless rhythm of weaving and unweaving the storied tapestry of forms and beings, and to look upon Mother Nature as an ever-waiting Penelope. It is something, however, for a short-lived mortal, to be able to beat the non-measured time of this world-rhythm.

Yet, the artistic sense will hardly be wrong in urging the incompleteness of this mechanical view of existence. Great creating Nature, according to this view, is not even a waiting Penelope. By doing and undoing, she does not even gain an inner result, more valuable than any other. Mechanical science can no more account for the artistic side of the world-drama, than the metronome can indicate the melody to which it is beating time.

The greatness of such an attempt as that of Mr Herbert Spencer lies in the heroic struggle to condense the world-history into a volume or even a formula. Our world has never seen a greater shoal of facts caught within the thin meshes of general ideas. But the facts, when caught and strung up on long lines to dry, seem to have lost their living hue and warmth. However genuine specimens when haled from the deep, they have been robbed of a great part of the truth of life.

The generalising method is a marvellous instrument for compressing the world into human dimensions. But an essential part of reality seems to elude its grasp. When we have climbed the Babel tower from which modern science shows us the vista of countless æons of the past and of the future, the world-drama appears distressingly colourless and lifeless.

Another method comes to the rescue, now as of old: the individualising method of poetry and art. When I try to realise in a glimpse the synthetic, world-conquering instinct of the modern English-speaking race, I cannot help contrasting Mr Herbert Spencer's synthetic philosophy with the synthetic pictures of Mr George Frederic Watts. When the ghastly skeleton-bareness of the Spencerian formula of Evolution and Dissolution haunts me, I turn with a sense of relief to three of the greatest pictorial visions ever thrown out from the inmost soul of a master: "Love and Life," "Love and



Death," and "Love Triumphant." In this pictured trilogy on Love there is the same gigantic condensation as in Herbert Spencer's philosophy. Only, the most general ideas about life and death are individualised into mythical figures. When the people at large awakens to see George Frederic Watt's undying art, these visions will perhaps to millions seem to afford the truest symbolic glimpse of our existence. And yet these figures are as mythical as any of the images of heathen gods.

II

Two great instruments of reduction and foreshortening have enabled men to draw more and more of the world within individual reach. Two ever-increasing armies have been struggling to conquer the vastness of time and space:—ideas and images, general views and concrete visions. This struggle is one of the greatest struggles for more and more life. The rivalry and, to some extent, the alliance between these two armies seems to give a clue to the parallel history of science and art, and to fill their annals with dramatic life and unity.

The history of Greek literature, from Homer to Lucianus, was as much a rivalry between ideas and images as the most vivid period of Greek history was an emulation between Sparta and Athens. The contest between the two world-conquerors began, as it seems, on the Ionian coast. The world-embracing mythical vision of the Homeric poems paled before the generalising world-views of the first naturalist philosophers. And the seeds of civil war within the minds of men were carried on trackless paths by a thousand ships to every Greek coast and island. For a thousand years the Greek mind became like a moving, rocking sea, always tending to equilibrium. Nowhere, perhaps, is the wonderful Greek sense of harmony and equipoise more strongly revealed than in the power of keeping up an ever-renewed truce or even alliance between philosophical ideas and mythical images. The Greek mind equally relished both, and excelled in making both blossom at the same time. Already in Homer the vision of

the immortal gods is bound up with the general idea of right measure and equity ("themis," "aisa").

When Homeric and other myths were revived in Athens, under Peisistratus, and after the great reform of Kleisthenes, abstract philosophy about the same time began to pour in upon the Athenians from east and west. In the happiest day of Athens seers and thinkers united their hands. Views and visions penetrated each other in poetry and plastic art, as in history and philosophy. The tragic writers succeeded in expressing, through concrete visions of individual figures, the highest general ideas, the "unwritten laws" of life. In his statues of Zeus and Pallas Athene, the gods of world-governing Reason, Pheidias seems to have combined Homeric and Attic mythology with the philosophy of Anaxagoras. The orators and historians, like Pericles and Thucydides, turned the prose presentment of contemporary life into an epic art. And while the tragic poets made the drama philosophical, Plato found the most pliant utterance of every delicate shade of thought in dramatic dialogues.

But the alliance was short-lived. The deep-stinging disappointments of the Peloponnesian war made it doubtful whether Reason was the governing factor either in human life or in the events which are beyond the control of man. In the art of Euripides the mythological and the philosophical world-views are painfully ajar. But this rich and pathetic inner discord made Euripides the true and typical poet of declining Greece. This unresolved discord became the tragedy of the Hellenic world. Neither Aristotle's world-embracing system, though transcending and outlasting the conquests of Alexander, nor the tough and sinewy wisdom of the Stoics, could be truly expressed in such vivid visions as to take hold of the popular mind. The people was rent in twain: philosophers on the one hand, and the superstitious masses on the other. Christianity conquered by a new alliance of great ideas and bright visions. An idea of human brotherhood, abreast of one of the highest flights of Greek philosophy, was enfolded in a vision of divine powers, far more in harmony with that wonderful idea than the vision of the Olympians had ever been.

In the Middle Ages, when the ground was cleared of the



ruins of the old social structure, a new society and a new art grew out of this new alliance. As the old Greek cities and commonwealths had sprung up round the holy altars and temples, so new towns and nationalities arose round sacred buildings, vast enough to shelter all classes of men, whether freemen or serfs, and all the infant arts and crafts. New nations gathered and ranged themselves round national heroes and kings of divine right, like those of the Homeric age. New epics elicited melody and rhythm from new-born tongues. Under the motherly roofs of churches and cloisters a new plastic and pictorial art was nursed, side by side with a new drama, and new systems of scientific generalisations.

But little by little, as their wings grew, they all began to long for the free and open air. The medieval age was a great constructive age, and it generally built on a large and noble scale. There is a splendid unity of style about its great constructions. The towering systems of scholastic lore vied with the soaring cathedrals themselves in aspiring boldness. The pyramidal structure of feudal society rivalled the domelike hierarchy of the Roman Church. But none of these strong-walled constructions could resist the expansive power of growing life. The religious drama stepped out into the open place in front of the cathedral, still for a time backed up by the Church, until it broke its tether and took to a free and wandering life. Sculpture and painting also freed themselves from tutelage, about the same time as scientific research. The figures which in the earlier medieval art had lived a cramped life, fastened to the church walls, like the rows of kings on the front of the Notre Dame in Paris, began to live their own lives, though a little stiff at first from having never moved or stood up by themselves.

The same holds good with poetry as well. In the old medieval epics and dramas the human figures often seem to live for the sake of the great social and religious structures to which they are appended. Even in Dante's immortal poem, the men and women are fixed to the huge framework of the world's different heights and depths. Though longing to live in the open air, they are still enclosed and covered by the heavy dome of the stiff medieval firmament.

But in Dante—not to speak of Chaucer—there are many signs of awakening movement and freedom in the figures. And in the art of the Renascence men and women with children are seen freely moving under the infinite sky of a new philosophy. A breath of open air plays round the noble naked or lightly draped forms in the Italian art. The often excessive delight in the nude can be easily understood, when we remember how people had been closed up in visored armour and wrapping cowl and ascetic doctrine. People longed to step out of the protective and hampering husks of guild distinctions and feel like human beings, face to face with nature. In Shakespeare's "King Lear" we see a most delicate picture of this great evolution. An old commonplace king, by his social position shut off from contact with the reality of life, is raised to the nobility of plain and naked manhood. From his fixed place in the social framework he is rudely thrust out, like the Duke in "As you Like It," to seek the rough and unceremonious hospitality of Nature. His kingdom lost, and his reason lost, he finds himself "a very foolish, fond old man," but still a man who can feel with other men, and put himself in the place of the "poor naked wretches." It is curious to notice in Shakespeare's plays how, one after the other, his later figures leave the unsatisfactory structure of society and seek a more human life in Nature.

In Shakespeare's plays the human figures of all sorts and conditions stand forth in bold outline, leaning upon themselves. There are only pale and fugitive traces of heavenly ceiling above, or of hellish prison underneath. Brutus and Cassius, who in Dante's dream-poem had been fastened for ever to the nethermost and narrowest circle of the infernal funnel, live bravely and die without dreaming of Hell. Shakespeare's world seems to be rounded with an almost agnostic obscurity. The new dazzling torchlight of human discovery of facts made the surrounding darkness even more opaque. Visions of men and women and children upon earth grew clearer than ever. But the great vision of another world had begun to fade.

It seems to me that the dramatic and pictorial art of the Renascence, no less than that of the age of Pericles, owed



its greatness to the happy alliance between general ideas and the faculty of translating them into images. The new idea of *man*, and of the nobility of human nature, was eminently apt, when melted in emotion, to be thrown out in the shape of *shareable* visions. To Marlowe and Shakespeare, man was the masterpiece of Nature's "curious workmanship." "What a piece of work is man," cries Hamlet, who, although an antique Dane, had been nurtured in the Renascence ideas about Man and Nature. Marlowe's epoch-making art is based upon an intense feeling of the new dignity of man, as endowed by Nature herself—

> "Nature that framed us of four elements
> Warring within our breast for regiment,
> Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds,"

says the youthful Tamburlaine. Nature has thrown heavenly fire into our frame, and the fire—at war with our heavy, earth-seeking substance—impels us to strive upwards.

> "For he is gross and like the massy earth,
> That moves not upwards," . . .

as Theridamas, Tamburlaine's follower adds. We can barely understand Marlowe's and Shakespeare's art without remembering the physiological ideas of that age.

To Shakespeare, in "Venus and Adonis," Nature is the maker of man, and man is a curious work of art. What makes dramatic and pictorial art unspeakably fascinating, is the idea of painter and poet entering into rivalry with "great creating Nature" herself:

> "Look, when a painter would surpass the life,
> In limning out a well-proportioned steed,
> His art with nature's workmanship at strife." . . .

The author of "Venus and Adonis" was not blind to the infirmities of human nature. In the fanciful words of Venus, the origin of evil is this: The chaste goddess Diana, feeling unsafe and uneasy, when gazing at the heaven-descended beauty of man, had bribed the Destinies

> "To cross the curious workmanship of nature,
> To mingle beauty with infirmities,
> And pure perfection with impure defeature." . . .

But this blending of divine perfection with some kind of earthly dross made man all the more dramatic, and marvellously fit to live in *tragedy*. Marlowe, no doubt, had keenly felt within himself, that what makes human life intensely dramatic is the "war within our breast" of the four elements, the aspiring fire and air, and the earth-bound water and mould.

The tragedies of Shakespeare mostly turn upon the struggle between the noble and the base elements in human nature. From the sonnets we seem to see that he himself went through a critical and almost fatal strife between his "nobler part" and his lower instincts (Sonnet 151). But after this personal crisis, which led the poet to sum up his wisdom of life in the words: "To thine own self be true" (*i.e.* to thy nobler self), the struggle of high-born natures with some baser metal becomes more intensely dramatic than ever. Romeo and Juliet had been fighting heroically against outward fate. But Hamlet's struggle with a kind of inward fate is more profoundly pathetic. What makes Macbeth, or Antony and Cleopatra, tragic to Shakespeare's mind, is the noble element of aspiring fire in their nature.

But was there anything noble in Goneril and Regan, Lear's unnatural daughters? Or in Timon's faithless friends? Or in the breakers of faith in "The Tempest"? Shakespeare seems to doubt it, and, therefore, to take very little interest in these persons. In the works of Shakespeare's successors, the nobility of human nature seems rather steadily to decline, and the persons become less interesting to us and to the writer himself.

In the age of Elizabeth, when nearly the whole nation had stood up united and felt itself raised by the swelling tide of heroic endeavour and success beyond hope, then the English, like the Greeks after Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea, were astonished at the greatness of man. The strong, breezy, all-pervading breath of the times, had kindled a flame of heroic fire in average mortals. But the Civil War in England, like the Peloponnesian war in Greece, extinguished the glamour. There might be something noble in all men, even in deadly opponents, as there may be some precious



metal in every common rock. But is it worth while to extract it? The new science outgrew the old traditional idea about the four elements in human nature. Civilised man seemed to grow more and more corrupt. During the first part of the eighteenth century a deepening shadow seemed to steal over the world of man. But a new and passionate yearning for nobility of life grew in that shadow. The eyes were little by little drawn towards a dawning light. *Nature* arose with a new-born glow against the sombre background of man. Nature was still innocent and divine. A golden ray of new hope shot across the old wrinkled face of Europe. Rousseau came down from the solitary fells and forests with a sheen of light on his melancholy brow. One poet after another brought tidings from his communion with Nature, as joyful as if he had discovered a new Atlantis. Man was to be regenerated by returning to Nature. Byron came back from his first visit to Italy and Greece with a new wondering delight, which kept up a lifelong struggle in his soul against cynical contempt. In enthralled Greece *Nature* was still as marvellous as of old. Such an earth and sky might again breed forth heroic children. In Italy, as in Greece, man alone had declined. The mountain mould in which Nature had cast the old glorious race, was still unbroken. Henrik Wergeland was enraptured to see that Norway was still the Norway of the saga age. The mountains carried their storm-beaten heads as high and as proudly as before. The headlands plunged as boldly and as deep into the sea. Nay, even the peasants were the same self-reliant race as of old. Their speech rang out as manly and clear, like blows of the axe in the woods. Whatever had declined, might be raised and redressed. Man was to *become* divine. That was the new vision which illumined the world of nature and man:

> "The world's great age begins anew,
> The golden years return,
> The earth doth like a snake renew
> Her winter weeds outworn."

Thus sings the chorus in Shelley's *Hellas*. In *Prometheus Unbound* the poet hears a voice of Unseen Spirits:

"Bright clouds float in heaven,
Dew-stars gleam on earth,
Waves assemble on ocean:
They are gathered and driven
By the storm of delight, by the panic of glee!
They shake with emotion,
They dance in their mirth." . . .

Great ideas again blossomed forth in bright visions. The idea of *progress* and forward movement seemed to shake off the burden of present evils. The imperfections of man were outweighed by the perfectibility of man. *The future* opened before the mind as a promised land, belonging to every nation, and with room enough for all. Never before had such a marvellous prospect opened to the eyes of men. Dreams of the future fed upon all the achievements of the past. Whatever *had* been, was a power in our nature, a seed which might rise again from the ground. Italy and Greece were to win back from the future their ancient glory and greatness. All down-trodden nations were to be raised aloft. History became a newly excavated treasure-house, an inexhaustible fund from which poetry and science could draw alike. In all countries, from Greece to Norway, from Scotland to Georgia, the national heroes and heroines began to revive and to grow in a new climate of time. As the Greek heroes had been dreamt to fight in the ranks of the living at Marathon and Salamis, so national heroes in all the countries of Europe seemed to be foremost in the struggle for freedom and advance. They did not stand up for their own country alone, but went with the free-corps of volunteers, who strove to liberate one country after the other. Like the knight-errants of the Middle Ages, their home was wherever there was a noble fight for justice and the uplifting of the weak.

In all the most flourishing ages of literature and art the great figures of the past have risen to new life and been used instinctively as organs for the growth of the living. This seems to me to be one of the chief laws of artistic vision. Great aestheticians, fond of classifying and dividing, have striven to separate Use from Beauty, and intended to glorify art by separating it from the life of action. But great



works of art have not always lived in museums. Michelangelo's David exposed his white marble limbs to the heat and cold of many Florentine summers and winters, as the champion of manliness and freedom, before he was shut up in the Academy of Arts. Not unlike the gigantic statue of Athene Promachos, the virgin protector of Athens, whose golden lance, glittering against the blue, was seen as a beacon far out at sea, and awoke in the homeward-bound children of Athens the vision of Thought—not as contemplative Theory, but as an armed and active power, unconquerable in fight;—the power which had vanquished the monster army of Asia.

The men and women in granite, marble, or bronze, whether in ancient Egypt and Greece, or in renascent Italy, have always been organs of the human "will to live." Rudimentary organs at first, and often hypertrophied and hampering organs at last, as the images of heathen gods were felt to be by the first Christians; or as the images and pictures in Christian churches were looked upon by the Puritan reformers.

We seem to get the clearest and most comprehensive view of the history and function of art, when we look upon its creations as organs of the human will to live freely and fully. Both science and art have instinctively been tending to acclimatise us in this weird and wonderful world of ours.

We have seen a glimpse of that great historical process, by which science and art have striven to expand our individual lives, and to make us feel at home in an ever-widening reality.

We have seen that in some of the greatest epochs of human history, general ideas and concrete visions have tended to unite in the struggle to incorporate the vast realms of space and time within each individual existence. Ideas and images are prehensile organs, by which a short-lived mortal is able to widen himself into a world. Views and visions may be said to form, by the most curious workmanship of creating nature, a double-chambered representative body, which does its most magnificent work when the two houses agree.

The life-expanding power of science and art has never been more splendidly revealed than in the present century. And in no other age have the poetical and the scientific method

been more subtly interwoven. To show this will be the aim of the following chapters.

III

In skimming through the pages of history we have glanced at the art of some of the great periods of revival. It should have been mentioned that in all these typical periods, in the most glorious days of Athens, as well as in the age of the Renascence or in the modern era, there has been a fairly simultaneous increase in artistic and scientific activity. In all the periods of exuberant energy, the rising sap of vitality has leapt out into new general views of wide-spanning laws, and new world-conquering visions. Nay, the new growth of energy extends to the arts and crafts of practical life. As every organ of a plant is awakened by the vernal showers to a quickened pulse of life, so all the organs of human growth seem to revive, one after the other, under the impulse of new-born victory or hope of victory. In conquering Athens and Florence or Elizabethan England, industrial and commercial enterprise flourished side by side with a more daring spirit in science and art. Marlowe and Shakespeare or Francis Bacon were no less adventurous than Frobisher and Drake. Creative energy, whether in art and science, or in industrial and military exploits, seems to be essentially the same. Scientific views and poetical visions are no less organs of growing vitality than maritime discoveries and industrial inventions. Invention, in every field of life, is the symptom of exuberant strength, and the instrument of widening life.

This is nowhere more clearly seen than in the history of the *nineteenth century*. In no other age has the overflow of energy created so many new organs of heightened life. New world-embracing philosophical systems have vied with new sciences, founded on facts, while almost all the old sciences and arts have struck out new, unexpected lines. New industries have sprung up, and have found an outlet in new-opened roads of commerce. An enormous number of new mechanical instruments have annexed the great forces of surrounding nature, and pressed them into the service of



the human will. New nations, and regenerated peoples, have risen to make use of these splendid tools.

But no feature of modern civilisation is more curious and significant than the wonderful revival of mythical visions, in the broad daylight of science. Shelley, Victor Hugo, and Wergeland seem to have possessed the myth-creating faculty in as high a degree as the creators of the old Arian mythology. Henrik Wergeland, the greatest Norse poet of the romantic period, quite naïvely and in good faith formed a new and fascinating myth about the creation of man. Victor Hugo planned a great epic poem which was to be a complete cosmogony, beginning with God and ending with *La Fin de Satan*, or Satan's final reconciliation with God. In Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, the ancient champion of aspiring mankind arose in a new shape, more noble and gigantic than ever. Nothing is more characteristic of the revival of creative energy in poetical art than the fact that the old myths and legends began to live and grow under new conditions of life.

The nineteenth century is not only the coal-and-iron age, canopied with smoke. In the memory of man its sky will for ever be illumined by some of the most glorious mirages ever thrown out from events within the human soul. To get a glimpse of the poetical expansion of life in the present century, we may confront the triumphal procession of machinery with the simultaneous poetical conquest of nature.

Poets like Shelley were not to be satisfied with the control which applied science was giving, or promised to give, over natural forces. He longed to be, not the master of a servile breed of unconscious Calibans, but rather the brother and friend of those great powers. He prays to the wild West Wind for help, as sincerely as any worshipper of ancient wind-gods. And he actually drew new strength from that intimate fellowship. He put himself in the Cloud's place, and felt his inner being expand by partaking of its ever-changing, ever-joyous existence. He made himself one with the power of pure fire and light, in the Hymn of Apollo, and his heart was filled with new ethical energy and gladness.

We find the same tendency to personify the forces of nature, in order to make friends with them, in Henrik Wergeland and other great singers of this century. Even in the England of our own generation, Richard Jefferies, the author of "The Story of My Heart," strove to draw mental strength from the great powers of nature.

There is, perhaps, in the whole range of history no more curious rivalry between the scientific and the poetical method than the two-fold manner in which the present century has been able to annex and humanise natural forces. At first sight it may seem that artistic results are nowhere compared with the enormous achievements of applied science. What has art to show against the steam-engine or the telegraph?

And yet one may doubt whether poets and painters have not contributed as much to the real progress of the nations. All the artist can do, is to win and wield the *suggestive* power, afforded by natural objects. But the output of this curious kind of natural force during the bygone century, or century and a half, has been enormous. I have touched upon the fact that when the rising tide of human corruption and injustice, in the latter half of the last century, filled people with a sense of approaching deluge, Nature seemed to reveal herself as the place from which a new salvation was to come. One may doubt whether our age would have witnessed the great triumphs of mechanical science without the astonishing change in temper, wrought by the suggestive power of nature. Many countries were as completely changed to the eyes of men as if they had arisen anew from the bath of a deluge. From the visions of poets and painters a new glamour fell over the land and the sea. Whole nations were cured of a partial blindness and opened their eyes upon a new reality. It was as if people had never before taken possession of their own country. This is especially true of the sparsely populated countries, like Scotland and Norway. But it holds of *all* countries in various degrees. What economist will undertake to estimate the rise in real, though perhaps not in nominal value, of Scotland, after Robert Burns and Walter Scott had thrown their visions over the land? And who can say how much that new taking possession of all the



countries of Europe contributed to the burst of creative energy in almost all the fields of practical life, and in science as well?

Perhaps Norway affords one of the most curious examples of the new vernal vision of the surrounding world. A small nation, which for centuries had been a borrower from other nations, and whose debt of culture had fallen into arrears, began to pay off in kind its immense national debt of honour. Poets and painters and musical composers vied with mathematicians, naturalists, linguists, and historians in creative genius. The country had been re-discovered. The enormous mountain and moorland wastes, which had been thought ugly and barren, were found to be an inexhaustible national treasure. No other country seemed to have such a common playground, which could never be invaded by toil, or grasped by individual greed. As political freedom was recovered step by step, Norsemen seemed to re-conquer their rocky, sea-girt corner of the world. A swarm of spontaneous, deep-felt songs burst forth from the souls of poets and musicians. Henrik Wergeland never tired of singing the praises of Nature's Paradise Regained, with a power of vision which has hardly ever been surpassed. And Björnstierne Björnson found the most simple and thrilling utterance, in ever-varying verse, for the nation's new feeling of filial love of that country which "rises furrowed and weather-beaten out of the sea." No poet ever embraced his country and its people in a more living throng of vigorous and tender visions. No modern writer has had a greater power of conjuring up scenes of human life against the softening background of Nature.

It is hardly to be wondered at that poets have often led the van of national movements. The self-consciousness of modern nations has in great measure been built up around poetical visions. A poet's eye can overlook the whole country in a glance, and make his vision visible to all. A poet can conjure up the great national figures of the past and summon from out contemporary life a national body of representatives who may live on from age to age, inhabiting the minds of men.

When the defeat of the Spanish Armada sent a thrill of joy through every English heart, the old Talbots and Warwicks

seemed to rise to their feet in full armour. Alarums were heard, whereupon kings and chieftains appeared in state, followed by troops from both sides, and fought out bravely once more the great War with France or the War of the Roses. England itself seemed to rise like a fortress out of the sea. It appeared to Shakespeare, like the Norway of Wergeland a few hundred years later, as a new Eden.

> "This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demi-paradise!
> This fortress built by Nature for herself
> Against infection and the hand of war,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in a silver sea . . ."

From the nineteenth century we seem to have slipped back again to the age of Shakespeare. But it is impossible to understand the modern revival of poetry, if we leave Shakespeare out of account. The re-discovery of this poet was to more than one poet of the romantic age an event of almost as great an importance as the re-discovery of the classics had been to the artists of the Renascence. In the time of Elizabeth and James, Shakespeare had been a great English poet. About the dawn of our century he became a world-poet, adopted by all the nations, and hailed as a deliverer from the reign of unimaginative prose. The Shakespearian boldness in looking at life through metaphors seemed to draw a veil of abstractions away from the world. From Shakespeare, more than from any other master, poets like Shelley, Victor Hugo, and Wergeland quickly learned to think through images, instead of abstractions. And the world upon which the new poets could direct the new power of vision, was even a greater reality than that of the old Renascence. Vast realms had been conquered by science and philosophy in the meantime. The life of action and suffering itself had turned up new problems and ideals. Novel aspects of reality were waiting to be realised in poetical visions. The new Eden of Nature which had been brought within sight partly through the patient labour of science, could only be entered into by artistic emotion.

Shakespeare seems to belong to our century more than to his own. After having been the greatest, but hardly the most



influential, poet of the Old Renascence, he became the leading poet of a New Renascence. His dream-children seem to have felt more at home in our modern age than ever before. They have been more tenderly touched, more eagerly welcomed everywhere. They have taken part in our private and national struggle for higher life. Their figures are deeply inwoven into the texture of modern history.

Especially the figures of the tragic plays. Falstaff and his fellows and all the wit-snappers may have lived more intensely in their own age. But the saddest children of Shakespeare's fancy have awakened an infinite sympathy in modern men. How is it, then, that they have not rather darkened the world of nature and man, than helped to make it brighter?

Let us venture to enter for a moment into the psychology of this curious race. The poet's people are not quite like other people. They seem to be a people of poets. There is no more prominent feature in Shakespeare's art than the immense liberality with which he lends out to almost all his figures his own faculty of thinking and feeling through images. Though Hamlet is extremely unhappy to feel that the time is "out of joint," yet it must have been a relief to be able to pen up a crowd of conflicting emotions in that happy metaphor. Though he felt at times that his subtlest enemy was something hidden in the very framework of things and within himself, yet he was able at any time to drag the intangible enemy forth and force him to take the shape of some visible object. Denmark, nay, the whole world, is a prison. The earth is a sterile promontory. 'Tis an unweeded garden grown to seed. He wishes that he, like Horatio, were a man,

> "Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
> That they are not *a pipe for fortune's finger*
> To sound what stop she please."

It would be a mistake to believe that Shakespeare, in his great tragic plays, was a servile realist, who went through all kinds of unhappy existences in the manner of self-torturing metempsychosis. Wherever he went, through the depths of human misfortune and crime, he always brought with him instinctive relief. Some modern critics seem not to have fully

realised to what an extent Shakespeare, even in his saddest outlook on life, has idealised his suffering, raging, world-cursing heroes. In Shakespeare's mind, their emotions are transfigured by serving as the motive power of a most victorious eloquence. Even the desperate passion of Lear or Timon gives us the sense of conquering power by making ideas and images move along in a vehement dance. The words have thrown off the sluggishness of ordinary speech; they seem to join and arrange themselves as willingly and briskly as children at play.

It is by no conventional artifice that these persons generally speak in verse. The impetuous, yet measured movement of speech is their natural language. As natural as it is to dance or whistle a rhythmic tune, when the heart is filled with the sense of conquering strength.

The very essence of art is, perhaps, nowhere more clearly revealed than in the way in which desperate grief and other life-destroying passions are instinctively transformed by the poet or the musician. Disorganising emotions, which tend to unravel the wonderful woof of life, are made to serve some organising, building-up process of the mind. The lyric and dramatic poet, or the tone-poet, instinctively uses mainly the *stimulating* element in some of the life-diminishing emotions. A funeral march by Beethoven or Chopin is an army of emotions, masked in melodious sounds, and lured away from the service of death into the service of life.

The essence of art is a free, unhampered play of the organising instinct, which makes for fuller and more wide-ranging life. It is a kind of immediate satisfaction of the "will to live," which is the same as the will to organise. It is true, as many writers on art have insisted, that a work of art need not aim at a practical result, though some of the greatest poets and artists have often aimed at some great religious, moral, or political result. The freest art is the art which is free to serve, wherever it likes and when it likes. But even when the artist consciously or unconsciously aims at some great practical result, the essence of his art lies in the immediate, inward result, in the new, creative organisation of ideas, images, and emotions.

There is an element of truth in the battle-cry of "art for



art's sake." The association of images and emotions which the artist and his public go through, is a goal in itself, just as every victory in the struggle for life is a goal in itself, besides opening up a vista of further victories.

Nowhere, I believe, is the very essence and ideal of life more clearly expressed than in music. I do not wonder that the greatest age of musical creation fell in with the modern idea of evolution and progress as the ideal of life. Lessing preferred an eternity of endless endeavour to an eternity of rejoicing after a final victory. And Goethe discovered the saving and divine element in man to be the eternal striving forward. In a sonata or symphony by Mozart or Beethoven there is an ever-victorious forward movement, but no hurrying towards a final goal. The goal in music, as in all the highest forms of play, is every stroke of victorious motion. The miracle of musical or poetical rhythm is that we feel the most perfect sense of rest in movement itself. In the flitting movement of perfect music or verse, now skimming the earth of struggle, now soaring aloft, we seem to realise the delight of the great sailing birds, flying partly for the sake of the flight. In the middle of a symphony we are out at sea on a voyage whose goal is wherever we feel the fulness of life.

Art is useful in the same way as play is useful. But no imaginable play can be more useful to modern man than the art which develops a sailor-like love of moving on in a world of endless change, and makes us feel at home on a coastless ocean of time.

The function of art seems to be to acclimatise us in this weird and marvellous world of reality, to which jog-trot routine and Philistine custom are striving to blind and blinker our eyes. It is curious to notice the bi-partite way in which the artistic instinct of man has warred against this shrinking away from life. The slinking and skulking have been attacked from two sides, as it were, by the *arts of movement* and the *arts of rest.* Seemingly opposite, they are both in reality co-operating to acclimatise us in a world of evolution and change. They are both struggling against what is inhuman and dizzying in the ceaseless, inexorable flow of time. While all the arts of rest, from pyramid-building architecture and monumental statuary

to portrait and genre painting, have dared to hail the passing moment with the Faustian words, "*Verweile doch, du bist so schön!*" the other arts, music, with poetry and dancing, have shown us how to feel at rest in movement itself. Both branches of art have taught us to lean confidently on the present moment.

However useful, all art is surely anti-utilitarian in the sense that it is opposed to the shrinking away from living *now*, and putting it off till later on, whether in the old age of money-making drudgery, or in that kind of "hereafter" life for which all the good things are to be saved up. It is significant of the function of artistic activity that the arts of rest and the arts of movement flourished side by side, both in ancient Greece and renascent Italy. Music, no less than sculpture or painting, invited men to make themselves at home in this wonderful world of ours, and look upon the present moment, when brimful of life, as an end in itself. Painting and sculpture vied in opening people's eyes to the beauty and fulness of life, contained in a single scene or situation. In the England of Shakespeare, dramatic art strove to fill out the place of pictorial art and the arts of movement combined. The unique development of the English drama was due in part to the concentration of nearly all kinds of artistic energy on the one form of art which seemed to yield the fullest sense of compressed life. Most of the persons in Shakespeare's plays, whether pure-hearted or wicked, are gifted with a delicate sense of sight and sound. Their strong and quick-running emotions, started by some critical encounter, blossom out in pictures and word music. While painting proper flourished on the Continent, word-painting and the art of seeing inner visions developed in England as nowhere else.

The more one lives one's self into the art of Shakespeare, the more one feels that in the strife with human beings or with fortune, the *issue* is not the main thing. Whatever the final result, whether idyllic or tragic, the struggle for life is worth living for the sake of the struggle itself. The trial of strength under high pressure sets the wonderful machinery of man going at full speed. There is a sense of vital victory in every telling effort. The drama is essentially a *war play*, and it burst



forth in Athens or England in an age of victorious national contest.

The heroic drama, as well as epic art, can only be understood in analogy with the martial games. The function of these different simulations of combat is to acclimatise man in a world of struggle, and to make him love the struggle not only for the spoil, but still more for the sake of swelling strength. To the Greeks of the time of Callinus and Tyrtaeus, as well as to the Teutons of the Eddas, or of Beowulf, the man who fought bravely to the death, had tasted the ripened fulness of life. Pericles, speaking over the grave of the young Athenians who had been killed at the very start of their race for glory, said that the shortness was in proportion to the intensity of their lives.

It seems to me that epic, lyric, and dramatic art throw a new light on that weird and uncanny world-drama which Darwin has entitled the Struggle for Existence. If we do not take the playing instinct of animal and human nature into account, we get a misleading and enormously pessimistic impression of the evolution of life. Life has only in part been a struggle for existence. To a very great extent it has been a struggle for the sake of the struggle. To feel his faculties grow, and the bow of his energy bent to the utmost, is to man and beast a hire which is worth the labour.

What the playgoers of Elizabethan England wanted to see, more than anything else, was a trial of strength, which levied the latent forces to the last reserve, *le ban et l'arrière-ban* of human nature. The play opened, just like the martial epic of Homer, at a critical juncture, which called for a mobilisation of all available forces. The preparation for war, and the imminent danger of a foreign invasion, in the opening scene of "King John," "Hamlet," or "Coriolanus," is symbolic of the dramatic situation which the conquerors of the Armada wanted to witness.

Nor must it be forgotten that even Shakespeare's art had to compete with that most dramatic trial of strength, called a bear-fight, fascinating alike to the Court and the Commons. Seen in this light, Shakespeare's art seems to rise above the level of his time like a mountain. The Shakespearian drama

is a trial of strength, like the bear-fight. Yes; but the highest human faculties are allowed to take part in the contest, and the fight is imperceptibly raised to a higher plane. The first scene of "Hamlet" prepares the spectator for a war with Norway, or, at least, some great and sanguinary encounter. But in the very first act the action takes an unexpected turn, and the chief battle-ground is shifted on to the inmost recesses of Hamlet's soul. In "Romeo and Juliet" the curtain opens on the most welcome and wished-for spectacle of a street-fight. We are admitted to see the broil from the very outset. The time and the place are well chosen. The time is an early Sunday morning in the hot season. None of the citizens of Verona are detained by work. And we may hope that the public place will allow space enough for all who can carry arms. From all sides, citizens are pouring into the place with clubs and bills and partisans. We hear the clash of arms and the shrill voices of old women. Everything promises a hot and glorious day. But lo, the Prince suddenly arrives and puts an end to the fray, before it has really begun. There are two or three scraps of sword-fight later on. But the main trial of strength is not the contest of the two houses, but the battle of Romeo and Juliet against fate. Shakespeare's art, which partly set out with military battle-pieces, little by little shifted the centre of gravity on to the highest forms of spiritual combat. The great common theme of most of the Shakespearian tragedies is the trial of strength between *Nature* and *Fortune*. "Nature," in Shakespeare's language, very frequently means human nature. What interests the poet more than anything else, and what to him seems most dramatic, is to see the latent resources of human nature muster in full numbers under the high pressure of adverse fate. In the power of facing the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" is the true trial of man or woman. Says the wise Nestor in "Troilus and Cressida":

> "In the reproof of chance
> Lies the true proof of men: the sea being smooth,
> How many shallow bauble boats dare sail
> Upon her patient breast . . .
> But let the ruffian Boreas once enrage
> The gentle Thetis, and anon behold



The strong-ribbed bark through liquid mountains cut,
Bounding between the two moist elements,
Like Perseus' horse:—where's then the saucy boat
Whose weak, untimber'd sides but even now
Co-rivall'd greatness? Either to harbour fled
Or made a toast for Neptune. Even so
Doth valour's show from valour's worth divide
In storms of fortune." . . .

The storms of fortune,—such is the climate where Shakespeare places his characters, to try "the fineness of their metal," and to draw out their hidden strength. The brutal trial of strength on the battle-field is much less dramatic to the author of "Hamlet" and "King Lear" than the struggle within the individual mind. Even great warriors, like Macbeth, Mark Antony, and Coriolanus, are by Shakespeare's art imperceptibly removed to a higher battle-ground. The martial encounters are merely incidents in the all-absorbing ethical combat. The most dramatic and critical scene in "Macbeth" is the trial of strength between Macbeth and his wife during the night when the good old king is murdered. And the most decisive and fascinating scene in "Coriolanus" is the trial of strength in the meeting of Coriolanus with his wife and mother, where the hero, owning himself defeated, wins the greatest battle of his life, in conquering himself.

In Shakespeare's greatest plays, the ethical combat between man's nobler and baser elements is the leading theme. The human drama, ever varying and ever essentially the same, is the duel between Truth and Untruth, which words include, in Shakespeare's language, faithfulness and faithlessness. In this world-wide combat women are seen to be no less heroic warriors than men. Cordelia with her old father are vanquished in the battle of swords. Truth is vanquished by untruth. But in the all-essential struggle for true life Cordelia has conquered and led her father to victory.

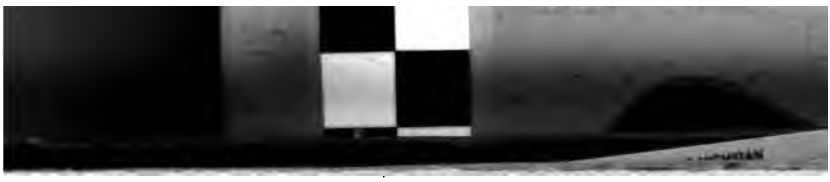
In one of the most thrilling plays of antiquity a young girl, Antigone, is chosen by the poet to show that pure love is "unconquerable in fight." If we were to overlook the history of literature, we should find that, however much the poets have contributed to throw a romantic glamour on war, the

essence of their art has tended to draw the interest away to some trial of strength in which the highest faculties of our nature are brought into full play. Even the epic poet, however martially minded, can hardly compete with military tournaments in vivid and dramatic representation of sword-play. . . . The main theme of the "Iliad" is *not* the war between the Achaeans and the Trojans, but the bloodless strife between Agamemnon and Achilles, far more interesting from a psychological point of view.

And the poet's point of view is necessarily psychological, more or less. In showing forth the outward man, and his outward deeds, the poet is not so well placed as the sculptor or the painter. But the whole inner world of man cannot be made clearly visible except in words. Both epic and dramatic art have an inborn tendency to draw attention to the human mind as the field where the most decisive battles of history have been lost or won.

IV

In the foregoing pages we have seen a glimpse of the *poetical vision of human struggle.* It cannot be said that Shakespeare has been afraid to look at the saddest and most poignant aspects of reality. Unnatural crime, vice, and insanity are by no means kept in the background. Yet the reality of life, as seen through Shakespeare's eyes, seems to me to be totally different from that kind of "reality" with which we are confronted in the works of a good many modern realists. Some of the leading modern writers, like Balzac and Flaubert, not to speak of their imitators, have made the curious experiment of showing how monstrous the human struggle for life would appear, if the ethical struggle were all but eliminated. Their pictures of life may perhaps turn out to be painfully useful in the long run, when the great modern epidemic of moral colour-blindness has worn itself out, like so many other plagues. It will surely be counted a redeeming point in these writers that they are frankly pessimistic. Being unable to grasp, in their poetical vision of life, that feature which makes life worth living, their human



nature nobly revolts against feeling at home in such a miserable world. It seems to me that modern pessimism is not so much a disease in itself as the natural reaction against a disease. It is curious to notice that Shakespeare, in some of his tragic plays, has depicted a somewhat similar state of mind, in Hamlet, Lear, and in Timon of Athens. Shakespeare seems to look upon the pessimism of Hamlet or Timon as the reaction of noble natures against a partially or totally colour-blind vision of life. The sudden revelation to Hamlet of the inconceivable baseness of some of his nearest relatives has for a time blinded him to the brighter colours of human nature. But Hamlet's pessimism is softened and partly cured by his admiration of one faithful and noble friend, Horatio, and by compassion with the fate of Ophelia. Almost exactly in the same way, Lear's pessimism is cured by contact with the heroic nobility of Cordelia and a few other faithful friends, and also by compassion with the sufferings of others. In "Timon" the poet shows us that the disease is not always cured, in spite of the noble efforts of a faithful servant.

It is very characteristic of the enormous difference between Shakespeare's tragic plays and modern pseudo-realistic plays or novels, that in Shakespeare there is always set up an ethical standard, embodied in some noble character, and always a struggle to set things right. Shakespeare never inflicts on us the modern torture of depriving us altogether of the company of normal and noble-minded people. That kind of modern Hell is not to be found in Shakespeare's plays. There is always some character which redeems human nature from the general curse. It is very significant that in depicting with tender sympathy the kind of pessimism which may infect a noble nature, he always at the same time indicates the cure. And in three cases out of four the healing influence of contact with noble souls and with innocent sufferers is delicately hinted. In Hamlet, Lear, and Coriolanus, the hard crust of bitterness melts, and even in Timon, the faithful servant Flavius at least makes a noble attempt at rescuing his deranged master.

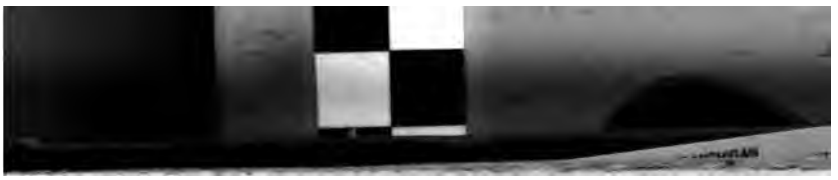
This instinctive desire of showing the cure as well as the

disease, is utterly different from the cynical sulkiness of some modern writers.

A few recent critics, such as Dr G. Brandes, have looked upon the author of Coriolanus and Timon as a lyric dramatist after the fashion of Byron, and imputed the world-cursing emotions of those heroes to Shakespeare himself. But the utter untenability of this view is shown by the fact that while Timon could not and would not see anything in human life but impurity and rottenness, Shakespeare himself does not care at all to draw Timon's ignoble friends into the foreground. He prefers to show us poor "noble Timon," more sinned against than sinning, to borrow the words of Lear.

The foreground figures of most of the plays belonging to Shakespeare's great tragic period, are high-minded souls who are poisoned by the real or supposed faithlessness of some of their nearest relatives or friends. It is evident that the poet's intense interest in such characters as Hamlet, Troilus, Othello, Lear, and Timon bears some intimate relation to the poet's own personal experience of human faithlessness. Several passages in the sonnets, compared with the mentioned plays, make it almost certain that Shakespeare instinctively used his dramatic figures as a kind of auxiliary organ in his own personal struggle against moral poisoning. But to look upon these figures as the lyrical mouthpieces of the poet's own feelings, is to simplify Shakespeare's psychology and strangely to undervalue his dramatic art. When he helped his suffering heroes to utter their emotion and give their sorrow words, he was not selfishly absorbed by his own sorrows. By putting himself in the place of others who had met with far greater misfortune, he went out of himself and instinctively strove to forget his own sufferings. His last plays seem to show the beneficent result of his tragic art upon his own mind. It is hardly possible to doubt that he instinctively cured himself, as he had tried to cure his dream-children, by contact with noble souls and great sufferers. The unique dramatic vigour of these great tragedies seems like the upheaval from an earthquake in the poet's own struggling and conquering soul.

Shakespeare's great struggle with despondency and despair



about human nature is typical of the inner drama of the Old as well as of the New Renascence. Our century, no less than the age of Michelangelo and Shakespeare, has been one long and varied combat between hope and despondency. Romantic dreams of a Paradise Regained, or to be regained, have partly been overshadowed by bitter disappointments. The great romantic poets themselves had to struggle with "Weltschmerz" and pessimism. It is only natural that the most exalted hopes and the highest aspirations should have to break themselves a way through the most thick-set difficulties. It is a law which seems to apply everywhere that the greater the forward impetus, the greater is the resistance of the surrounding medium.

It seems to me that the very technical construction of almost any one of Shakespeare's tragedies is typical of the drama of human life in all periods of heroic aspiration. The trial of strength in "Romeo and Juliet" between human nature and fortune is set a-going by the impatient and impetuous character of the lovers, including the rival, Count Paris. Even in "Hamlet," the sting of disappointment is in direct proportion to his previous exalted admiration of man and woman. The aspiring ambition of Macbeth, Coriolanus, Cæsar, or Mark Antony naturally creates that head-sea, against which their daring crafts are broken.

We need not look pessimistically upon the pessimism of the nineteenth century. We are disappointed at not having carried the promised land by assault. The glorious dreams of the romantic period have been followed by a sulky "realism," which takes a self-torturing revenge upon the evils of life by collecting and exposing them, the more the better. There is a kind of inverted idealism which is not generally appreciated in the determination to make the worst out of a bad world.

Cynical realism is one of the outgrowths of impatient idealism, which is clearly seen in some of Henrik Ibsen's later works. Modern realism is really only one phase of the great romantic period, which I have ventured to call the New Renascence. As soon as we have got over the passing disappointments, we must take up the dreams of the great romantic poets and try to realise them. Reality itself is

essentially romantic, and very much of that which is commonly called realism, is a veil which has been thrown over the world in the latter half of this century.

From practical life itself an ugly mist has arisen, which has done more perhaps than anything else to hide the poetry of life. From the sphere of economic life the higher moral instincts have been eliminated to an astonishing degree. It was here that Balzac caught the vision which he extended to other fields of life, of the almost non-moral struggle of brutal passions. The so-called "economic man" of the Manchester school is not merely a scientific abstraction. It is astounding to what an extent we have succeeded in turning this scientific monster into a reality. Of course, human nature has not been radically changed. After a certain hour in the day, the most purely economic man may become a generous altruist. Balzac, as far as I can judge, did not see that the brutality in great part belongs to the system, and only in part to the persons. The system of "free competition" is a kind of gigantic and exciting game; and one of the rules of this game is that the altruistic instincts are out of place, as much as at a game of cards.

It can hardly be denied that it is partly with the assistance of economic science that the rules of one of the lower kinds of game have been extended to an enormous portion of practical life. We are all of us players in this ugly game. No particular class is particularly at fault. It is a game which clearly tends to develop our nature in a retrograde direction. But it seems to me that the knowledge of this fact throws a softening light on the rather wide-spread brutality both of modern life and of modern literature. We are like children who have been trained in a brutalising game. Give us another kind of game, equally exciting, and we may perhaps show another side of our nature.

Shakespeare already seems to have seen, and even himself personally experienced, the hardening and dehumanising influence of the economic game. To Timon of Athens *money* is the surest instrument of demoralising and destroying mankind. Yes, if it is put up as the prize in a game which gives the most careful training to our selfish instincts.



In the second half of this century other branches of science have contributed, much against the will of their noble-minded founders, to throw a dismal light upon reality. The doctrine of Malthus, widened by Darwin, seemed to show that the principle of brutal competition was one of the leading principles indwelling in the very nature of things.

The awful and law-abiding regularity of crime, pointed out by Quetelet and other statisticians, and the heredity of both crime and vice, pointed out by modern physiology, also seemed to show the enormous brutality of the governing forces of reality. Realistic writers might think themselves in touch with reality by describing the brutality of life in a brutal manner.

To many thinkers it was a kind of relief to throw the whole responsibility on Nature, or some unknowable First Cause, and to believe that everything is as it must be. Vice and virtue are natural and necessary products, "like vitriol and sugar." Man seemed to return to the state of innocence, carrying with him thither all the latest modern imperfections. "In the realm of nature there is no dirt," Taine emphatically declared. And Flaubert, in one of his letters, triumphantly urged that monsters, according to the discovery of Geoffrey St Hilaire, are as natural and legitimate as any other creatures. Nature herself became a monster, immensely prolific, and immensely indifferent to the fate of her offspring. Nature's paradise regained seemed to become a place in which Mephisto might have been well pleased. Some of the "naturalist" novelists, by an inverted natural selection, picked out for enduring life in art the human specimens which were least worthy of life. Poetical creation and recreation tended to become a transmigration of the soul through a series of impure human beings, a torture without purifying effect, and, so far, an original Western invention. Poetry, in some places, seemed to crawl on the earth, and to live on the half-digested crumbs which fell from the table of science. The old romantic boldness and independence of poetical visions seemed to crouch before the enormous superiority of science.

"Man delights me not, nor woman neither," was the disappointed cry of the Old Renascence. "Nor nature

either," the New Renascence might add. Nature seemed to be utterly dehumanised by science. The great romantic poets had looked upon all natural forces as akin to ourselves. But science had discovered that it was a remnant of the old mythology to talk even of natural "forces." Force, if looked upon as a cause of motion, is an anthropomorphous and unscientific conception. The poetical instinct seemed to have nothing else to fall back upon than to look upon Nature as an inhuman monster, like the ancient goddess Ishtar, as Professor Huxley suggested,—the unmotherly mother.

Under these circumstances—from where is the light to come? Victor Hugo has answered: "From yourself, in very truth!"

> "D'ou viendra la lueur, o père?
> Dieu dit:—De vous, en vérité.
> Allumez, pour qu'il vous éclaire,
> Votre coeur par quelque côté!
> . . . . .
> Il faut aimer!"

From our own heart the light must come which alone can make the earth inhabitable. To the greatest of French poets our own human kindness is the little lamp which helps the great suns to light up the world.

> "Though death were king,
> And cruelty his right-hand minister,
> Pity insurgent in some human breasts
> Makes spiritual empire, reigns supreme . . .
> Your small physician . . .
> Will worship mercy throned within his soul
> Though all the luminous angels of the stars
> Burst into cruel chorus on his ear,
> Singing, 'We know no mercy.' He would cry
> 'I know it,' still."
>
> Sephardo, in George Eliot's "Spanish Gypsy."

If nature is brutal and inhuman, *we* must be all the more human. If unconscious Nature is indifferent, and may kill her own children, like a sleeping mother, then we, who are conscious, must be all the more motherly. "We are children of a large family, and must learn, as such children do, not to expect that our hurts will be much made of—to be content



with little nurture and caressing, and help each other all the more." (George Eliot, in "Adam Bede.")

On no writer of this century had Nature's real or seeming indifference made a deeper impression than on George Eliot. "While this poor little heart was being bruised with a weight too heavy for it, Nature was holding on her calm inexorable way, in unmoved and terrible beauty. The stars were rushing in their eternal courses. . . . The stream of human thought was hurrying and broadening onward. . . . What were our little Tina and her trouble in this mighty torrent, rushing from one awful unknown to another? Lighter than the smallest centre of quivering life in the water-drop, hidden and uncared for as the pulse of anguish in the breast of the tiniest bird that has fluttered down to its nest with the long-sought food, and has found the nest empty." ("Mr Gilfil's Love-Story.")

Without this intense feeling of Nature's indifference, we should not have had the unspeakable intensity of human sympathy in George Eliot's work. Never before had the maternal instinct found such an outlet in poetical visions of everyday life. The most commonplace people she strove to draw within the reach of her all-embracing sympathy, which is not seldom coloured by a sarcastic vein, as a Norwegian river by green water from the snowfells. In spite of this blending—to come within the magic circle of her vision of human life, has to thousands of readers been like coming into a warmer climate.

To Richard Jefferies, one of the most passionate lovers of Nature, "all nature, the universe as we see it," became "anti-human" and, from our standpoint, unnatural. "Nature sets no value upon life. . . . The earth is all in all to me, but I am nothing to the earth. . . . No kindness to man, from birth-hour to ending; neither earth, sky, nor gods care for him, innocent at the mother's breast. Nothing good to man but man." . . . We must look to ourselves for help. . . . How pleasant it would be each day to think, To-day I have done something that will tend to render future generations more happy. The very thought would make this hour sweeter. . . . How willingly I would strew the paths of all with flowers, how beautiful a

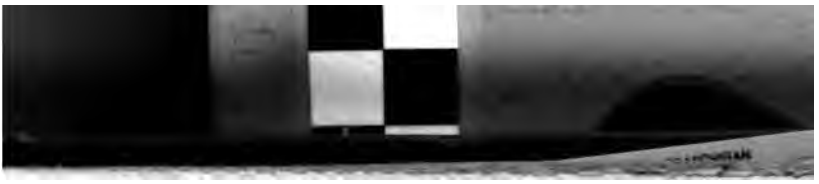


delight to make the world joyous! The song should never be silent, the dance never still, the laugh sound like water which runs for ever." Thus spoke the dying poet of "Field and Hedgerow," in the very age of realism. "The stars care not, they pursue their courses revolving, and we are nothing to them. There is nothing human in the whole round of nature. . . . If the entire human race perished at this hour, what difference would it make to the earth? What would the earth care? . . ." ("The Story of My Heart.") But from the fact of love within his own heart he drew a new world-conquering hope. "As a river brings down suspended particles of sand, and depositing them at its mouth forms a delta and a new country, . . . so the united action of the human race, continued through centuries, may build up the ideal man and woman." The sense of conquering love within himself makes the future open out again as a promised land. Disease and bodily weakness may be eliminated. He doubts whether death itself is really inevitable. No difficulty seemed unconquerable to love.

The art of realism in the literature of this century has divided itself into two main currents. One which has striven, though not successfully, to imitate the moral indifference of "Nature." And another which the Darwinian spectacle of "Nature red in tooth and claw" awakened into a more ardent sympathy with everything alive. Poets like Tennyson and Browning, or Björnson and Tolstoi, have proved that to poets, as to prison reformers and other philanthropists, the *knowledge* of natural or human brutality may be transformed into a power of helping love. The idea of brutal facts is a new fact, which is opposed to brutality, just as the knowledge of disease makes for health.

The age of realism is not so dismal after all. Its highest art has been the art of extracting new loving and helping power from the vision of painful facts. From this art of our age some light seems to fall upon one of the most curious features of the poetry of the romantic age.

It was from no ignorance of the evils of life that the greatest modern poets solemnly declared all-embracing love to be the born ruler of the universe. It was right in the face of almost over-



whelming injustice. In Shelley's vision, Prometheus is chained and riveted to the rock by a seemingly omnipotent evil power.

"And yet to me welcome is day and night.
. . . I hate no more."

He feels unconquerable, because he has conquered himself.

"Yet am I king within myself and rule
The torturing and conflicting throngs within."

Shelley's vision of the power of all-embracing love in *Prometheus Unbound* will for ever shine as a beacon from one of the highest peaks of poetry. And its pure flame is answered by similar visions signalled from the summits all around. In Beethoven's Ninth Symphony a hundred jubilant singing voices have invaded Schiller's poem on Joy, and burst the narrowing bounds of speech.

"Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
. . . . . .
Groll und Rache sei vergessen;
Unserm Todfeind sei verziehn!"

In Goethe's "Faust," as in Wergeland's great poem on "Man," love is the born conqueror who must win in the end. To Victor Hugo the abstract sign of the Unknown becomes a new symbol of faith. "He is X with four arms to embrace the whole world."

"Il est X a quatre bras pour embracer le monde."

The sacred sign of the cross, shaken and half overthrown by science, is rediscovered in the scientific symbol of an unknown reality. The slanting cross of science itself, half striving upwards, half leaning on the ground, combines the yearning for the unknown with the knowledge of love as the greatest fact upon earth.

There is, perhaps, no more curious fact in the history of literature than the singular weight with which almost all the greatest poets of the modern age have declared Love to be the greatest force in Nature. It would be superstitious to accept this message as a revelation from an absolutely authentic source of information. The poets of our century, from

Shelley and Victor Hugo to Björnson and Tolstoi, have probably had no more express mandate of revealing the truth than Homer and the other great myth-makers of old. But it is not difficult to see from what source they have drawn their passionate vision of love as the born ruler of the universe. They have drawn it from the depth of their own experience. They themselves, in the reality of their inmost life, have seen altruistic love to be the one force which could conquer all the other forces and set them free at the same time. It was all-embracing sympathy and love which set free their highest poetical power. This is clearly seen in Shelley or Wergeland. But it is equally true of the others. A large stream of tenderness welled forth into the world from the great philanthropic poets. Sympathy or love was felt to be the highest and the most creative force within themselves. It had re-created modern poetry and art. It was tending to re-create modern society and the art of living. The assertion of the supremacy of love was felt to be the strongest assertion of the "will to live," and the will to create.

But the vision of Love as the born ruler of the world, however far from omnipotence, does not belong only to the modern age. From Sophocles and Plato, from Dante and Shakespeare, the same message comes to swell the chorus of modern singers. Some of the believers in Love, Dante, for instance, have held it to be a governing world-power. Others, like Sophocles and Shakespeare, have even preferred to show Love fighting against overpowering odds. In Shakespeare's "Othello" and "Lear," true love seems to struggle against the united forces of Fortune and human fraud. But to fight against odds is the hero's lot and the true trial of his utmost strength. *Love Triumphant*, even in outward defeat, is the central vision which the greatest English poet has thrown out over the human struggle for life. And the splendidly acute scientific views of Darwin and Herbert Spencer have not been able to dim that poetical vision.

The instinctive tendency of art, as I have tried to hint, is the struggle for the fulness of life. This fulness of life the author of "Romeo and Juliet" and "Lear," like the author of *Prometheus Unbound*, found in true and faithful love. The struggle for life was transformed into a struggle for love.



Between Darwin's great view of brutal struggle as the main factor in the creation of species and the poetical vision of Love as the power which is born to rule, there may seem at first sight to be an impassable gulf. The schism between the artistic and the scientific world-view may seem to be greater than ever before. The principle of war to the death seems to stand over against the principle of love to the death.

But the poet's vision of life really includes the brutal facts of the Darwinian view. In "Romeo and Juliet" Shakespeare has shown us the spirit of love rising out of the old bloody family feud—love to the death blossoming out of war to the death, the very history of life in the shortest sum.

And the Darwinian view in reality includes the growth of sympathy and love. The real history of the struggle for life is the record of the struggle for more and more *widened* life. The self-preserving instinct first tends to outgrow the individual, then the family, and even the nation or the race. The most entrancing fulness of life is the expansion of self through all-embracing love. The individual struggle for life widens into a struggle for the lives of all.

It is curious to notice how some of the most combative poets, such as Victor Hugo, Wergeland, and Björnson—all of them splendid fighters—have instinctively striven to unite the combative instinct with the yearning for universal harmony and love. To combine that *struggle for right*, which has been the leading principle of Western civilisation, with that spirit of *all-embracing love*, which is the greatest gift to mankind from Eastern culture—such a synthesis seems to be the central problem of life. If the problem is rightly put, the solution, of course, cannot lie in Tolstoi's abandonment of the active struggle for right. That is a one-sided Eastern view of the matter. Nor can it lie in Nietzsche's brutal and short-sighted application of the Darwinian law to human life. It can only lie in the closer and closer interweaving of universal sympathy with the active struggle for the liberation of the highest faculties of all—if need be, against their owners. On that condition alone can we look upon the struggle for life as an art for art's sake. And the art of some of the most representative Western poets, Shelley, Victor Hugo, Wergeland, Björnson, decidedly

points that way. If it is the artist's function to help us to make ourselves broadly and widely at home in this world, these poets seem to have been great seers and revealers of the art of living.

"Love thy neighbour like thyself" is the great light which has risen sun-like in the East to travel round and for ever illuminate the world of man. But the spirit of Western civilisation may venture to add: "And fight against your fellows as you would fight against yourself!"

V

The great schism between scientific views and poetical visions may seem to have gone on deepening during the modern age. The romantic poetry and the positive science of the present century seem to be as divergent as poetry and science have ever been. Yet it may perhaps not be impossible to prove that science itself is unconsciously tending to heal the schism. The marvellous structure of natural science, which seems to be the greatest wonder of modern times, is greatly indebted to the poetical method of looking at things. And the highest flights of romantic poetry are as greatly indebted to the discoveries of science.

Some of the old medieval cathedrals were believed to be reared with the aid of the demons. However unacceptable that may be, it is impossible to doubt that the towering structure of modern science has been built up with the assistance of the mythological method.

It is tempting to the pride of our age to compare the mythical gods of nature, at best haughty and strangely capricious friends, with our own safe and servile mechanical monsters. But it should not be forgotten that the idea of *natural force*, which is embodied in modern machines, is a remnant of the old mythological visions.

The very idea of energy or force is necessarily anthropomorphous. Says Professor Pearson, in his "Grammar of Science": "Force as a cause of motion is exactly on the same footing as a tree-god as cause of growth." The whole idea of enforcement is a "fossil" or a "ghost" of the old animism. Force, according to the purist grammarian of



science, should be reduced to a measure of movement. Why it cannot be dispensed with altogether, Professor Pearson does not say.

Some of the greatest modern physicists do not seem at all inclined to dispense with the notion of force as a cause of motion. If the idea of real enforcement is dropped, nature becomes a life- and force- less shadow, which scientific imagination will hardly be able to lay hold of. But it must be admitted that the idea of force *is* anthropomorphous. Professor Pearson is undoubtedly right so far. The conception of "natural force" is a remnant of the old mythological vision, which was probably the natural and quite legitimate starting-point of the human conquest of nature. There is no other way of realising the beings which act upon us from without than by conceiving them in analogy with the energy which we immediately feel within ourselves. Science, like poetry, will always remain human, and therefore anthropomorphous. There is only a question of degree. Science may rectify and reduce the anthropomorphous vision by eliminating the specifically and exclusively human elements. But unless *some* human element remains which really belongs to all other natural objects as well as to ourselves, we cannot understand natural objects, nor deal with them at all.

It is evidently by the poetical method alone that we can put ourselves in the place of other agents and feel their active forces in analogy with our own. Even the scientific thinker, if he wants vividly to realise the active nature of some organic or inorganic force, instinctively recurs to the mythological method. This is clearly seen in Newton's great vision of mutual attraction. Modern science may prefer to discard the anthropomorphous idea of attraction, which is evidently borrowed from human feelings. But the fact remains that Newton must have used the analogy of human feelings in order to realise the mutual interaction of earthly and celestial bodies. Without intensely feeling himself into their indwelling forces he could hardly have caught the creative glimpse of the law of their motions.

When modern chemistry was built up round the vision of chemical attraction or "affinity," creative science had again

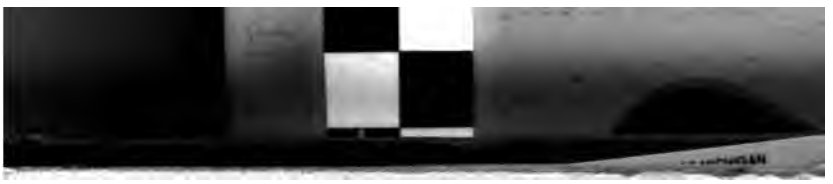
resorted to the anthropomorphous method, and duly checked it by analysis and abstraction. We find the same fruitful use of the mythological method in Darwin's great vision of "natural selection." And it seems doubtless that the four almost simultaneous discoverers of the law of "conservation of energy" must have used the same anthropomorphous method. At least three of them, Mayer, Joule, and Colding, seem to have had an unusually vivid sense of natural force as something living, or even divine. Another scientific discoverer of this century, H. C. Örsted, in his philosophical work on "The Spirit of Nature," holds that the creative or active force in Nature is something spiritual, "or akin to the force which we feel within ourselves."

Galilei's discovery of the elementary laws of motion is hardly without connection with the passionate admiration of active force, which is characteristic of the Italian Renascence. The joyful sense of human energy and the artistic enjoyment of movement in human life made all energy and all movement enormously interesting.

The idea of natural *law*, like that of natural *force*, is evidently anthropomorphous and poetical at the outset. The original and creative visions of natural law were based upon the analogy with human laws. Nay, even the founders of descriptive science must have based their views of "genera," "families," "classes," and "kingdoms" upon human analogies.

The most creative steps in natural science seem to be due to the mythological method, united with and checked by the analytic and generalising method. This fact, if it can be completely proved to be a fact, would seem to meet half-way and join with the fact that some of the greatest works of artistic creation have borrowed and embodied some general idea. It stands to reason that ideas and visions, as belonging to the same human nature, are made to co-operate, rather than to be at war.

Professor Pearson holds it to be a fault in Newton that he clung to a "metaphysical" conception of force. The same noxious weed of animism Professor Pearson has found in some of the leading modern physicists, notably Lord Kelvin and Professor Tait. But pure science, like the Pure Reason of



Kant, is probably only an abstraction, never to be met with in real life. *Creative* science, at least, seems always to be infected with the fertilising element of some poetical vision.

If science were really to evacuate the whole realm of active force, in the more or less anthropomorphous sense, which is the only possible sense, poetry would be enormously well off. No monopoly on earth would be comparable to the exclusive right to look upon everybody and everything as a living and acting force.

But the human experience of thousands of years has proved that the poetical method *alone* cannot properly utilise that magnificent territory. This seems to me to be one of the most significant facts of human history. The youthful attempt at grasping all the surrounding world-powers, by means of great poetical visions, and making friends with them, by means of gifts and promises, proved in the long run to be a glorious failure. The poetical method alone was insufficient. But in the greatest of all human conquerors, the scientific ideas of "force" and "law," there is still a "ghost," as Professor Pearson says, or a fruitful germ, of the old mythological visions.

Modern science may, perhaps, be proud to think that it has not killed, but incorporated, the most epoch-making of all poetical creations.

The force which is acting and moving in every modern machine is still akin to the old gods in so far as it can only be realised by the poetical method. If science, in order to be "pure," prefers to discard that method, it can only get at the visible effects, but not at the cause. The moving force can only be *felt*, by the agent himself, if he has feeling, or by one who puts himself into the place of another being and feels its active energy *from within*.

It will ever remain the privilege of the poetical method, whether used by scientist or poet, that it allows us to put ourselves in the place of another being. It seems to me that in our present unpoetical age we have been much too shy of using this method, especially in the schools. The only way in which we can realise the splendid power, indwelling in a moving locomotive engine or a steam-boat, is candidly to

imagine ourselves, as far as possible, in the place of the expansive steam and feel its force for a moment as *our* force, and its huge metallic limbs as *our* limbs. Such an anthropomorphous vision of a machine would perhaps bring us a good deal nearer to the state of mind of the creative scientist and inventor. A really synthetic view, or rather vision, of a machine *in motion* is simply impossible without the use of the mythological or poetical method.

The curious indifference with which most of us look upon the marvellous creations of applied science, after the first sensation has worn off, is probably due to our shyness of looking at them in a poetical way.

No moving thing in heaven or on earth can be realised in a synthetic glimpse, except by the poetical method. This is equally true of a human organism, an animal, a plant, or a mechanical engine. If we want to make these beings move and live in the minds of the million children in our schools, we must teach them to put themselves in the place of one individual animal, plant, or machine. The excessively anthropomorphous result is to be checked and counteracted by analysis and abstraction. Such is the way in which natural science has been created. Such is the way in which it must be re-created within the mind of every new learner.

Even a beginner in botany can mentally take a delicate plant to pieces and study its typical organs. But no botanist on earth can mentally put the plant together again, except by lending it his own organic life and his own human sense of moving energy.

The enormous supremacy of science in the latter half of this century has upset the balance between the two methods of incorporating the world. The one-sidedly analytic and generalising way in which science is being popularised, has thrown a curious veil on the surrounding world. We dare not look at things through the anthropomorphous method. The poetical vision of things has been frightened away, as a romantic extravagance. We dare not live resolutely and candidly in the whole human reality. The living and acting element has been little by little receding into the forbidden realm of mythology or metaphysics. Herbert Spencer tried



to tie up all creative energy in a bundle, branded "The Absolute," and to sink it in the bottomless well of the Unknowable. But it is not only the "Absolute power" which is unknowable to the purely scientific method. It is every kind of active force. The realm of unknowable mystery has immensely widened from Herbert Spencer's "First Principles" to Professor Pearson's "Grammar of Science." From the bottomless abyss a mysterious darkness is rising to engulf us all—every moving thing. And this is a real progress. The gathering gloom is the forerunner of new daylight. We have only to open our poetical eyes to see that the world of mythical mystery, the world of active and creative force, is the only world in which we can feel at home. We are mythical beings, in the sense that we are the owners of an indwelling active force. Every one of us is the depositary of a little bit of the living and creative energy of the world. The most insignificant particle of dust is instinct with a fragment of undying energy. Science has for a time been almost obliged to remove the disturbing element of living force. During the romantic age the poetical powers had grown too lively and troublesome. Poetical visions, like buoyant children, were expelled for a while from the laboratory of Science, and rigorously forbidden to touch her microscopic specimens, and break into her enormously difficult calculations. But Science will call the mischievous children back again; she cannot do without them for long. She will borrow the irresistible words of the French poet:

"Enfants! Oh! revenez!—Tout a l'heure, imprudent,
Je vous ai de ma chambre exilés en grondant.
. . . . . .
Espiègles radieux que j'ai fait envoler,
Oh! revenez ici chanter, danser, parler." . . .*

The most unexpected result of modern science will be to call back the poetical visions to new honour and dignity. The world of reality will be more poetical than ever before. Science herself has shown that the whole world of real, actual force belongs to the poetical vision for ever.

* Victor Hugo: "À des Oiseaux Envolès."

The human mind has to look out upon the world through a pair of glasses, either of which gives a one-sided and misleading impression of reality. There is no other way to live in the whole human reality than by looking at the world through both lenses at the same time. Some of the greatest minds may have been able to do this, to a very great extent. But mankind at large has still to learn to see through the analytic and the synthetical method at once. We are still groping and tottering infants. The world's great age has not yet begun.

To understand the confidence with which the great poets of the romantic age believed in Love as the power born to rule the world, we must remember that the fruitful mythological element in natural science pointed in the same direction as the highest psychical experience. The force of gravity itself was nothing but the activity of attracting others. And when Herschel's discoveries extended the law of mutual attraction from our solar system to the immense world reflected in his telescope, the Universe became at the same time enormously widened and drawn enormously near to man. The moving force within every star was akin to the highest power felt within ourselves!

"J'aime !—Voilà le mot que la nature entière
Crie au vent qui l'emporte, à l'oiseau qui le suit !
Sombre et dernier soupir que poussera la terre,
Quand elle tombera dans l'éternelle nuit !
Oh ! vous le murmurez dans vos sphères sacrées,
Étoiles du matin, ce mot triste et charmant !
La plus faible de vous, quand Dieu vous a créées,
A voulu traverser les plaines éthérées,
Pour chercher le soleil, son éternel amant.
Elle s'est élancée au sein des nuits profondes.
Mais une autre l'aimait elle-même ;—et les mondes
Se sont mis en voyage autour du firmament."

With these lines from Alfred de Musset's "Rolla" may be compared the passionate sense of the kinship between all the forces of nature and the forces felt within ourselves, which had been expressed half-a-century before by Herder, in his "Philosophy of the History of Mankind," and which drew forth a hundred melodious echoes from the hearts of the poets.



The sense of kinship between human sympathy or love, and the moving forces of the whole wonderful universe was further strengthened by the discovery of chemical attraction or "affinity." Here again creative science, as mentioned before, had instinctively resorted to the anthropomorphous method in order to realise the active nature of force. And here again the poetical vision of science drew forth new poetical visions from the poets.

It is true that the romantic poets and philosophers carried the mythological method too far, and looked too confidently through the poetical lens alone. Poets like Shelley and Wergeland made the kinship between man and the non-human forces of nature much too close, and thereby contributed to bring about a positivist reaction. The extravagance of the great metaphysical thinkers did still more to discredit the anthropomorphous method in the eyes of severe and sober science. The great positivist movement, which has carried so many even of the poets along with it, was helped into power by the intemperance of the romantic age. The main time-keeping movement of the present century seems to have been the great oscillation from excessive romanticism to excessive positivism. The time has now come for a reconciliation. The poetical method must be acknowledged as an indispensable prehensile organ. Though the kinship between the highest forms of human energy and the surrounding natural forces may be much more distant than it seemed to romantic enthusiasts, still it is unscientific to deny that there must be *some* kinship. The romantic dreamers were not wholly on the wrong track. Their great visions, counterbalanced by science, may once more help us to feel at home in the world.

Even the great law of Evolution or Development is clearly based upon the analogy of human growth and striving for progress. The striving forward, which to Lessing and Goethe was the divine and redeeming element in human nature, seems to be the divine element in great creating Nature herself. That the sum or the resultant of the world's great forces is more akin to forward yearning mankind than to a dead and masterless machine, which grinds out Evolution and Dissolution with perfect indifference—this is only an hypothesis.

But it seems to be the only working hypothesis by which mankind can live and thrive. It is a metaphysical hypothesis suggested by modern science itself, and one which may be submitted to a kind of experimental trial. In the vital competition between the races or the nations, the different creeds are being subjected to a slow and rather clumsy process of natural selection. That creed which has the greatest vital value is likely to survive.

But we need hardly wait for the arbitrament of natural selection. A process of artificial selection may be used in accordance with that logical method which John Stuart Mill has termed the concrete deductive method.

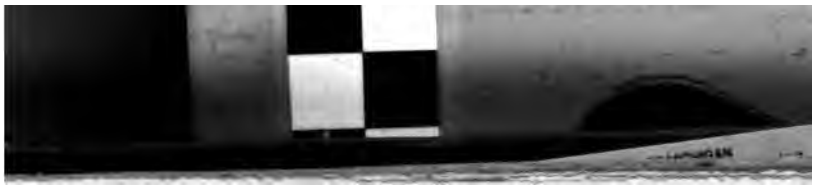
The hypothesis that the Universe is a kind of monstrous machine, is a world-view which tends to make the world uninhabitable to man. A family or a nation whose "will to live" is not young and strong enough to blossom out into a hopeful view of the world, is comparatively unfit to live. From the known laws of life we may safely deduce the thesis that hope and trust is better armed in the struggle for life than diffidence and distrust. And this almost indubitable deduction may be verified by personal and national experience.

The world-drama, as far as we can see and guess, is a voyage of discovery, bound for eternal progress. The human struggle for progress widens itself into a world-struggle, going on everywhere in boundless space. The yearning for advance and victorious creation in the little world of individual man feels itself like a solo voice swelled and uplifted by an enormous near and distant chorus.

VI

The essence of victorious life is successful creation. And the function of art is to display and develop the organising or creative instinct. From the art of the great creative masters some light seems to fall upon the very essence of healthy and happy life. It may be worth while to look attentively for a moment upon the work of Shakespeare or Michelangelo, and try to obtain a glimpse of artistic creation.

The two great masters seem to have spent the best part of



their vital energy in shaping images of other people, and going through many lives in foreshortening. But is not this rather a second-hand life, in the realm of shades?

In Shakespeare's plays we get to know hundreds of persons. But we look in vain for Shakespeare himself. He has lent to these strangers from many lands and times, his power of thinking through images, his quickness of thought, his delicacy of feeling, his unique eloquence. Like a father who divides his goods between his children, he has given them his all. He has made them a gift of himself. And so it is with Michelangelo, who gave four or five years of his life only to the ceiling figures of the Sistine chapel. Both seem to have forgotten to live their own lives, or only to have lived them in short snatches.

But in losing themselves they found themselves. That seems to be the essence of creative life. The artisan or the manufacturer may keep a great part of *his* inmost nature for himself. But the creator must give himself away. He must lose the best part of his life in others. And the lives of these others will become *his* lives.

Michelangelo did not live in that age of bodily vigour and beauty only with his own imperfect body. His own frame could not contain the seething life of his soul. Nor could he contain his vital energy within his own century. He instinctively created himself new and infinitely more plastic bodies. Bodies which were moulded, not by his ancestors, but by his own heroic soul. Bodies chosen from the age of a giant race. It seems impossible to understand Michelangelo's art without remembering that all these bodies of heroes and heroines were the auxiliary organs of the artist's inner life. They were formed from within, like all other organs.

Shakespeare's great family of figures must be looked upon in a similar way. They were ever-varying organs through which he manifested his insatiable will to live. Through some of them he tried the utmost forms of outward and inward adversity; through others, the fairest wind of smiling fortune. Through all he gained experience of human strength, and pliability to every kind of fate.

What the self-created shapes of alien bodies may be to the



creative artist, is perhaps never better illustrated than by the art of one of the heroic souls among the living, Mr George Frederic Watts. After having re-created out of his own soul so many great and noble forms, he seems to be concentrating the indomitable endeavour of his old age on the great equestrian statue of "Physical Energy." The struggle for life by means of auxiliary self-created organs, and the bold struggle of art against time, were never more clearly revealed.

Wordsworth's, Shelley's, or Byron's nature-poetry illustrates the same law. To Wordsworth "the high mountains were a feeling," and an immense auxiliary organ of freedom and strength. Byron strove to annex the ocean, and waft all across the sky of Europe that gigantic banner of the thunderstorm "streaming against the wind." While Shelley put his soul into the cloud and the wild west wind, and made them the body of his purest desire.

The form of St Peter's dome in Rome will for ever stand like a superhuman gesture in stone of the heroic life-will of Michelangelo's old age. But even if that gesture should crumble to dust, the stream of melodious sound in which Beethoven embodied his struggle with fate and his moments of victorious joy, will rush on through all the ages of man. And all the nations will drink of that holy perennial river.

It seems to me that creative art throws a partly new light on the history of human civilisation, or on that process which Herbert Spencer has called super-organic evolution. One is sometimes tempted to doubt whether that tremendously long and expensive process has been worth the trouble. Is civilised man, after all, a much finer animal than all the others? I think that many of us may answer with true humility in the negative. Many animals have better eyes than we have. Better noses, or teeth, better lungs and stomachs, and swifter legs. Not to speak of their freedom from most of our diseases and vices.

When some travelling Eastern potentate is taken round to see the marvels of Western civilisation, we show him our ships and machines, perhaps our horses, but seldom our men. Our greatness does not lie so much in ourselves, as outside ourselves, in the enormous variety and power of the auxiliary organs, which our brains have created.



Organic creation seems to have grown tired, when it reached man. We may perhaps take it in the best sense, as a compliment. Even Darwin's great creating Nature does not seem to have used her famous method of natural selection with very brilliant results, as far as civilised man is concerned. It is evident that she has surrendered some part of her creative office into our hands. The whole history of "super-organic evolution" is the history of the creation of auxiliary, loosely appended organs.

To our humility we may append a huge amount of pride, when we think of these supplementary organs. Our eyes may be inferior to those of the eagle. But instead of going on developing our eyesight, we have spent a vast deal of splendid energy in developing the sight of inorganic lenses. And the telescope easily outstares the keenest animal eye. Our legs, as a rule, may be weak, for want of use. But we can nevertheless outrun the swiftest quadruped, or outswim the champion fish.

The advantage of having these unattached organs is patent to everyone. The human body is scantily clothed by Mother Nature. But no animal or bird can moult their old coats as easily as we can. It would be cumbersome to carry about ourselves any kind of shell, at all comparable in value to our modern houses. Or to keep within our own body all the cutting, sawing, thumping and throwing, lifting and propelling tools and organs, which civilised man cannot do without. It is far handier to keep a minimum thermometer hanging outside our window to watch and register the lowest temperature during the night than it would be to keep holding our hand out of the window during all that time. And many of these organs have developed into a much higher perfection than our own organs would ever have attained to.

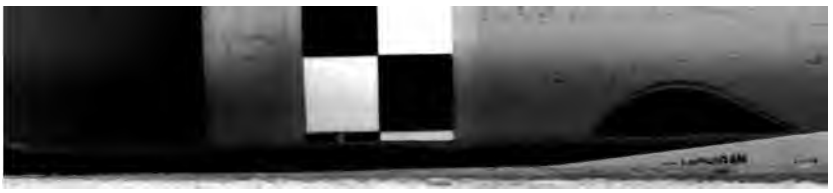
Super-organic evolution may be on the right track after all. And it may be consoling to think that our enormous imperfections are due, perhaps, to our having hitherto sunk too much of our vital energy in auxiliary organs. This new creation entails new risks and dangers. Our teeth may delegate so much of their function to the mill-stone or the knife that they get too little practice themselves. Some of our corpulent men and women seem too fixedly appended to a wheeled



vehicle or a comfortable chair. Those snug and convenient shells which we call houses, are often so elaborately equipped that a little army of servants must be appended to our appendices, and the housewives themselves may have enough to do to keep their homes and servants in order. The snail's shell is a light burden compared to the dead weight of some modern homes. And our huge mechanical engines are not always *loosely* attached to men, but often like monsters which have enthralled human individuals. Nay, even the splendid prehensile organs of poetical visions and scientific abstractions have often been nets which our brains have thrown out to catch hold of the outer world, but in which we have got entangled ourselves. This applies not only to the old mythical visions which for thousands of years enslaved men to imaginary powers—originally organs of growth, but afterwards hampering dead-weights. It also holds good of the gigantic cobweb of modern mechanical, world-embracing generalisations, in which the catchers themselves have been caught. The same iron age which has fastened millions of human workmen to mechanical appliances, has done its master-stroke of mechanical invention by attaching us all, the living and the lifeless, to an eternal engine which works out Evolution and Dissolution with awful regularity.

Omnivorous novel-readers allow the heroes created by another man's brain to do all the heroic work which is necessary to satisfy their ideal needs. Whole nations may have declined partly through hypertrophy of the organs created by art, which took up too much of the energy of the leading classes. Great artists themselves have sometimes become living appendices to their works of art. Flaubert half jokingly calls himself a man fastened to a pen, *un homme-plume*. And the wonderful growth of half-human monsters which issued forth from the teeming brain of Balzac, seems to have arrested some of his highest human instincts in their growth.

It is an enormous advantage about the auxiliary organs that one of them may be worked by many united men. But this advantage involves a great danger. Individuals may become too much entangled by these splendidly perfected organs.



This holds not only of factories and mines, but also of that highly developed organ which is called society or the State. It has too often been forgotten that the individuals should not be appended to the State, but *vice versâ*.

We are still living in the hobbledehoy age of the too rapid growth of supplementary organs. When we think of the enormous burden of our military armaments, we need not smile at the men of the Middle Ages who shut themselves up in heavy armour and strong-walled towns and the cumbersome structure of feudal organisation.

The present huge devolopment of auxiliary organs which are still in great part arresting our growth, reminds one of the gigantic and shapeless forms of *organic* creation in some of the earlier epochs of the earth's history. We may look forward to the time when human individuals will really be the masters of all their attached and unattached organs. If the monster machines can help us in the long run to deliver all human beings from life-long drudgery and set free more and more hours of the day for the self-chosen exercise of outer and inner organs, then man may still become a magnificent animal, through the help of auxiliary organs. The untiring, unsuffering machines of the present day are the successors of the human and animal slaves of the past. Partly also the substitutes of those monster deities to which even freemen and monarchs were enslaved.

It seems to me that poetry and art may be able to contribute enormously to the liberation of man from the excessive growth of auxiliary organs. This is the point at which I have been driving. Was it not to a very great extent the artistic sense of the Greeks, which freed or protected the Hellenic race from the gigantic excrescences of Oriental superstition and state machinery? The leading principle of Greek civilisation was the artistic sense of the nobility and beauty of man. The Greeks were the first of all civilised men who dared to strip off the long Oriental clothes and exhibit the perfect limbs of youthful manhood to the eyes of the eternal gods. It was by transforming the deities of nature after the likeness of idealised man that the Greeks conquered enslaving superstition and dared to stand up with heads erect in the face

of the gods, and to criticise their deeds. The shining vision of noble manhood caused the Greeks to shun any kind of gigantic structure, either in art or in social organisation. They instinctively felt that the vision of individual man would be dwarfed by the huge shadows of pyramids of stones or conglomerated men.

The art of the Renascence, as I have hinted above, again raised the vision of the glory of individual man, which tended to break up the hampering social and religious structure of the Middle Ages. And in our own century poets and artists have been instinctively striving to disentangle the individual man and woman from all kinds of enslaving and muffling auxiliary organs. Of course, they may have often gone too far in reacting against the oppressive weight of social laws and customs, or mechanical machines. But it is, nevertheless, one of the greatest glories of British and Continental art to have worked for the liberation of man. Perhaps nowhere more than in the British islands have the poets and artists of the present century striven to draw men and women and children out into the open air, and to stem the tide which caused greater and greater numbers to be swallowed up by the towns and the factories:

> "Go out, children, from the mine and from the city—
> Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do—
> Pluck your handfuls of the meadow cowslips pretty—
> Laugh aloud to let your fingers let them through!"

These words of the great English poetess seem to sound forth from a thousand poems and pictures of the coal and iron age, and to show that art is once more coming to the rescue of man. From the epoch-making landscapes of Constable and Turner to the pictures in which Clausen, La Thangue and many others celebrate the work of the fields, or visions of the nobility of man by artists as different as Watts and Walter Crane, and the new British school of sculpture, British art seems to have been in the van of a great historical movement.

If I were to answer a question about the instinctive tendency of the highest British poetry and art of modern times, I should venture to say that the trend of the current, in spite of some



backward eddies, points towards a healing of the great schism of the Old Renascence between art and puritan piety. A synthesis of ethical piety and purity with artistic joy in the beauty and fulness of human life would go far to make the English-speaking folks the leaders of the New Renascence. A somewhat similar synthesis is the crowning vision in Henrik Ibsen's greatest and noblest work, the informal and perhaps unpremeditated trilogy of "Brand," "Peer Gynt," and "Emperor and Galilean."

The *application of science* to almost all the arts of life has been the most prominent triumph of our age. And the enormous amount of energy, locked up for many generations in mathematical and mechanical research, has proved a splendid investment. *Poetry and art* seem now to be waiting for their turn to be *applied* to the art of living. Our libraries and museums have accumulated the quintessence of the vital endeavour of thousands of years. They are savings-banks whose treasures are being used by comparatively few.

The artists themselves, to a very great extent, instinctively apply their artistic temper and vision to the art of living. If we want to learn from the painter, we must apply the picturesque way of looking at things not only to pictures, but to real objects and scenes. The vision embodied in his art we must, in a measure, throw back upon nature. This, of course, was the process by which the art of the Greeks, or the art of the Renascence, tended to make the world new to the eyes of men. It was the same spontaneous process, by which the poets and painters of this century drew a veil of mist away from reality. The humorous vision of preposterous things belongs to the very art of living of great humorous poets or draughtsmen. We should remain outside their art, unless we were able, in some degree, freely to apply the same vision to similar objects. And this we do when the work of art has entered deeply enough into our minds.

One gain to be drawn from this point of view will be an obstinate longing to penetrate more deeply into the works of the masters. We shall not care to read so many books, or look at so many pictures, or listen to always new pieces of music. We shall be more eager to incorporate at least a

few of the greatest works of creative genius. There is, perhaps, no greater obstacle to the artistic education of mankind, than the modern habit of making our brain a kind of inn or hotel where the visions of artists arrive and depart in ceaseless succession. Though we may keep a few chambers for passing guests, we ought to make an abiding home in our minds for those whom we love for life.

A partly new way of studying the great masters seems to open up before our eyes. To make a real home within our selves for some of the greatest works of art will be the same as to translate them back again from effects into causes; from visible and audible works into working power; from crystallic gems into living fire.

One of the most fascinating tasks of the coming century will be the liberating of the frozen-up fire of swift emotions and flash-like visions embedded in the great works of poetry and art, including the artistic records of real history. More inexhaustible than the stores of solar energy of myriad years, which were hidden in the dark cellars of the earth, these works of genius are hiding human energy of the highest order in coal-like, or rather diamond-like, compression.

These crystallisations of the most wonderful events which have happened within some of the most gifted minds make up a fairy-tale treasure large enough for the whole quarrelsome human family. Every member may take as much as he can, without robbing his brother and sister.

The practical application to everyday life of these general suggestions implies two main practical problems. The first question, as hinted above, is how to train ourselves to apply artistic visions and emotions to our own real surroundings. How to catch some rays of the golden and tender light of Rembrandt's vision and throw them from within our own inmost soul upon the people we meet in the street or at home; how to look upon our own living contemporaries with something of the tenderly humorous emotion of Dickens and George Eliot, or with a spark of Shakespeare's glow of sympathy and compassion;—that is the first question which has to be solved by personal experiment.

The great poets have excelled in putting themselves in the



place of other characters, often very different from their own. They have been able to look upon their fellows *from within*, to a marvellous degree. This is the very essence of the method of all the greatest poets, from Homer to Shakespeare, and of the great novelists, dramatists, and historians of our own century. This poetical method we must strive to use every day within our own human circle. When every small human circle is lit up with the Roentgen rays of sympathetic vision, then, and only then, will man become a truly social being. This is the first practical problem.

But it is not enough to envelop our own real surroundings, whether nature or man, in penetrating visions and emotions. Such visions and emotions must find an outlet in daily *deeds*.

Boys and girls are greedy devourers of adventurous and heroic tales from history and fiction. It is more than probable that if the generous emotions thus kindled, of courage and enterprise, faithfulness and endurance, or magnanimous mercy, do not find some constant outlet in everyday life, these emotions tend to lessen, instead of increasing, our ability to do similar deeds. We contract the *habit* of letting heroic emotions evaporate, or rather stagnate, without issuing in heroic deeds.* The greedy consumption of such tales and stories seems to produce a kind of mental and cerebral *fat* which makes the higher ideas and emotions more or less torpid and inactive.

It may be that heroic and other idealistic literature is no less dangerous, in the long run, than cynical and pessimistic writings. Nay, there seems to be rather a short bridge between the two extremes. The youthful artists, or would-be artists, who gorge themselves with grand and romantic emotions, are singularly apt to turn cynical pessimists, on becoming aware that real people, especially other people, are far from being heroic.

Mr. Oscar Wilde, in his book on "Intentions," held that the best thing about art was that it kindles "exquisite sterile emotions"; in other words, emotions which we need not trouble to use in practical life. But the laws of human nature

* In Professor William James's "Principles of Psychology," vol. i. pp. 125-126, the reader will find some excellent remarks upon this subject.

do not seem to allow that any mental—and cerebral—energy disappears. It *must* have *some* practical result, either positive or negative. It must either propel us to action, or make us more torpid than before.

But how is the modern boy or girl to apply anything like heroic emotions to his everyday life? Can our children kill the giant, or help to conquer half the world?

Most certainly they can. And by daily effort. A task as romantic as any that is told of in history or fiction calls upon the children of our own age. The whole human race has to be regenerated. Every organism must be re-built, as it were, through its own efforts. A new and more beautiful mankind is to look out upon a new and brighter reality. In spite of our splendid auxiliary organs, and partly through wrong use of them, we have slipped down to be, on the whole, the most weak and unhealthy of all animals—perhaps excepting some of the beasts we are fattening for our food. We are inhabited by a greater number of noxious parasites and bad habits than any other living creature. Why should not *man* be at least as healthy as any other animal? Why not as long-lived as a raven?

One of our bad habits is to speak of the "human beast," *la bête humaine*, in referring to our vices. The animals might retort the insult by pointing to some of our domestic and captive animals as sadly and sordidly *human*.

If man could become one of the finest animals, in physical perfection, it would be something to begin with. The physical and mental regeneration of the human race, this is a task which requires heroic visions and emotions in everyday life. The campaign may be long. It requires a larger army than any that has hitherto waged war upon earth. The hundreds of millions of human beings must be enlisted as volunteers.

The Greeks seem to have been, on the whole, the finest human animals upon record. A great deal may be learnt from them. In the ancient Greece of the greatest period, artistic emotions were not shut up within the bounds of so-called "pure art." Art was not isolated from other human activities. The visions and emotions kindled by *sculpture* were not used to gorge and fatten a torpid race of artistic



epicures. Else there would soon have been no models from which beautiful statues could have been moulded. Artistic emotion overflowed into choral dances, athletic games, and other trials of agility and strength. As to this fact there seems to be a general agreement. But it has been less noticed that *music*, no less than sculpture, contributed to make man the master of his own supple body. No other nation seems to have equalled the Greeks in attuning every-day life to the bird-like agility and alertness of music. In ancient Greece, more than anywhere else, the easy grace of rhythmic movement pervaded all the branches of human activity. In no other nation has the artistic sense of harmony and rhythm become so organic, or so deeply ingrained. Nowhere else have all the simulating arts been so closely in touch with almost all the arts of living. "Pure art" did not stand aloof in haughty and sulky isolation, which is apt to turn poetry itself into a stagnant pool of impurity. Art for a long time kept its purity by lively circulation of the sap of energy between one branch of human activity and all the other branches.

Poetry and pictorial arts should again unite with civic ardour, with ethical self-culture, with religious worship of ideal perfection, as in ancient Greece. The bird-like movement of music should again flow out into choral dances, and pervade our whole organism with a new elastic vigour and buoyancy. All the simulating arts should unite in the Herculean task of making everyday life poetical, plastic, and picturesque.

* * * * * * *

One of the greatest movements of the present day seems to be the gradual application of the all-conquering methods of empirical and experimental science to the bettering of *ourselves*. The ethical movement, if I understand it aright, aims at nothing less than the regeneration of man by means of physiological and moral hygiene. The time seems to have come for leading the victorious army of applied science from the outworks of human life to the very citadel; from the revolutionising of human implements and appliances to the radical renewal of man himself.

Psychology and hygienics, in turning every one of us into a laboratory of personal experiments, bid fair to become two of the most distinctive forces of a new reform movement.

The greatest of human wars of liberation can only, it seems, be fought by an invisible army of scientific ideas beleagering and burning out our invisible invaders. The struggle with the infinitely small organic parasites, and with the giant Bad Habit whose many heads are so apt to crop out again,—this inner struggle will perhaps take up the foremost place in the imagination of men, and drive the pictures of all other kinds of war into the background.

But scientific ideas alone, however practically applied, will hardly be able to regenerate human life. There would be something disappointingly stiff and machine-like about the methodically and strictly hygienic man.

The pressing problem of a new reform movement is a more complicated, but also a more fascinating one. The problem can only be solved by uniting the two old rival armies of general ideas and artistic visions in a common campaign. After having rivalled in conquering the immensity of the outward world, and thereby lost their hold on the human body and soul, they may join their banners for the conquest of the little world of man himself. And man may prove to be their greatest and most glorious battle-field.



THE DYNAMICS OF DEMOCRACY

STANTON COIT

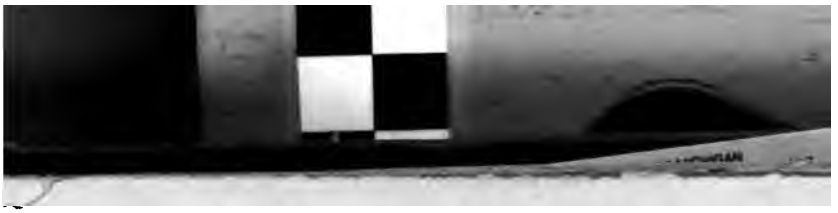
IN the whole literature of politics there is no more penetrating analysis of the mental energies which generate and are generated by democracy than that presented by Mr Walter Bagehot in his book on "The English Constitution." But while it is exact and searching, his analysis is neither cold nor indifferent; it glows with enthusiasm for the beneficent influence which democracy exercises over every person who vitally participates in it.

He contrasts the constitutional form which Government by the people has received in America with that which it has assumed in England. Contrary to the common opinion, he traces the great evils of American political life not to democracy itself but to anti-democratic machinery which the founders of the United States introduced in order to check a full, free, and rapid expression of the popular will. It is generally supposed that America is more democratic in machinery; while England, although aristocratic in form, is more democratic in spirit. But Mr Bagehot shows that England, by virtue of one peculiarity in her Governmental arrangement, is incessantly manufacturing democratic intelligence and the democratic spirit; while America is not. The reason, therefore, according to him, for the fact that England is more democratic in temper and habit, is not only that her machinery offers less check to any expression of the popular mind after it is formed, but that it actually fosters, vitalises, stimulates, and educates public thought and character.

This beneficent peculiarity in her constitution is her Government by Cabinet—by a special committee of the House of Commons. Not only does the House virtually (although not formally) elect the supreme executive of the Nation, but at any

time when it opposes the policy of its chosen rulers it can and does turn them out of office. "The House is an Electoral Chamber; it is an assembly which chooses our President . . . but because the House of Commons has the power of dismissal in addition to the power of election its relations to the Premier are incessant. They guide him and he leads them. He is to them what they are to the Nation. . . . The Cabinet is a committee which can dissolve the assembly which appointed it. It is a committee with a power of appeal. It is a creature, but has the power of destroying its creators. It is an executive which can annihilate the legislature, as well as an executive which is a nominee of the legislature." Because the Cabinet and the House are perpetually dependent upon the Nation at large, they have a motive for continually enlisting the interest of the voting public and instructing it. "Cabinet Government educates the Nation. The great scene of debate, the great engine of popular instruction and political controversy, is the legislative assembly. A speech there, by an eminent statesman, a party movement by a great political combination, are the best means yet known for arousing, enlivening, and teaching a people. The Cabinet system ensures debates, for it makes them the means by which statesmen advertise themselves for future, and confirm themselves in present, Governments. The nation is forced to hear both sides. . . . And it likes to hear—it is eager to know. Human nature despises long arguments which come to nothing . . . but all men heed great results, and a change of Government is a great result."

Mr Bagehot contrasts such executive by a committee of the House of Commons with the American system of executive by a President, who, although his whole policy may fail to receive the backing of Congress, remains secure in office until the end of his appointed term. The result of this system is that Americans have no motive to attend continually and thoughtfully to politics. "Under a Presidential Government a Nation has, except at the electing moment, no influence; it has not a ballot-box before it; it is not incited to form an opinion like a nation under a Cabinet Government; nor is it



instructed like such a nation. There are, doubtless, debates in the legislature, but they are prologues without a play. . . . The prize of power is not in the gift of the legislature, and no one cares for the legislature. . . . No Presidential country needs to form daily delicate opinions, or is helped in forming them. . . . The same difficulty oppresses the Press which oppresses the legislature. It can *do nothing*. . . . The papers are not so good as the English, because they have not the same motive to be good as the English papers. . . . Unless a member of the legislature be sure of something more than speech, unless he be incited by the hope of action and chastened by the chance of responsibility, a first-rate man will not care to take the place, and will not do much if he does take it. . . . The principle of popular Government is that the Supreme Power . . . resides in the people—not necessarily or commonly in the whole people, in the numerical majority; but in a chosen people, a picked and selected people.* Under a Cabinet Constitution at a sudden emergency this people can choose a ruler for the occasion . . . but under a Presidential Government you can do nothing of the kind. American Government calls itself a Government by the supreme people; but at a quick crisis, a time when a sovereign power is most needed, you cannot *find* the supreme people . . . all the arrangements are for *stated* times. There is no elastic element. . . . You have bespoken your Government in advance, and whether it suits you or not, whether it works well or ill, whether it is what you want or not, by law you must keep it."

We find Mr Bagehot tracing all the corruptions of political life in America—the venality of the Press, the aloofness of the best citizens—to its anti-democratic devices—fixed terms of office for the executive, and an executive independent of the legislative body; while he derives the life, the spirit, the sense of responsibility, and the keen intellectual interest of the voting public in England, from England's ultra-democratic fusion of executive and legislature, and her dissolution and appeal at the moment of every great crisis.

It is democracy, then—the form of Government whereby

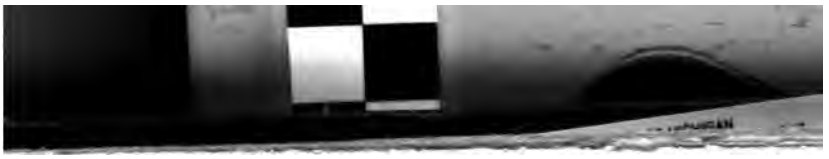
* For my criticism of this opinion, see pages 314, 317.



the sovereign people sensitively and continuously makes itself felt—which is also the creator and preserver of civic virtue, and which gives a motive to restraint of passion and to strenuous exertion of thought. It is democracy which, while stimulating, yet regulates debate, transforming it from an irresponsible wagging of tongues into an earnest wrestling of wills and contest of intellects. It is democracy which invests political discussion with the dignity of deeds. Democracy is the one form of Government which can and does beget intelligence and virtue in the millions. It is the one form which provides a motive for being intelligent and virtuous. On the other hand, every anti-democratic or un-democratic arrangement is a deadening force against the rational and moral nature of the many. It closes up a possible field for the exercise of what would be best in men, if it were only allowed ever to come into existence.

A political organisation that is not democratic may possess other advantages, but it cannot manifest those marvellous excellences which sociologists have discovered to be the qualities of every vital organism, whether vegetable, animal or social. Every organism, except of the lowest type, is an aristocracy; but in the same sense, every democracy except of the crudest form, is also an aristocracy (see p. 338). Democracy is the only organisation which tends to transform itself into a spiritual organism. It alone allows every moral personality in the State to be at the same time both means and end to all the others, as are the members in every healthy living body. It alone can distribute the thought, foresight, and self-control of all to each and each to all.

Whoever, therefore, works in the cause of democratic advancement feels himself supported by the profoundest philosophic conception of our age. He rests upon the principle of ethical sociology, that Society in all its group-structures and all its various functions must, in order to be just and healthy, be organic. Make society in the church, in the school, in the playground, in the factory, and in the legislative hall, a spiritual organism! That is the law and the prophets. That is individualism, that is socialism. That is Christ's, that is Paul's teaching. That is ethics, that is the



Ten Commandments, and the Two summed up into one. That is the injunction which democracy alone can carry out, since only its organisation introduces the reciprocal service of each and all, which characterises organic interaction. Any other government, any rule by one, or by a few, for the many is at best a moral pauperisation of the many. It may give them creature comforts, it cannot awaken moral dignity. Only the conferring of conscious sovereignty, with its responsibilities and its discipline, can communicate character.

Morality is, therefore, essentially bound up with democracy, and democracy with it. Government by the people is moral in its effects, and morality is essentially democratic in its tendency. The democratic tendency in morality is the one aspect of it which theological dogmatism, priestly supremacy, autocratic government, and free industrial competition have systematically and persistently denied, and, by denying and by coercion, have in great part counteracted. But the result has involved a perversion of the moral judgment of man. Religion, education, and politics have all connived until now to distort conscience and enlist it into unquestioning subordination to outside persons instead of to one's own inner reason and will. In industry, submission has been enjoined to the employer; in politics, to the king; in science, to the schoolmaster; in religion, to the pastor, the priest, and the Book, and, instead of to the God within, to a god outside of each man's own reason. Yet by the testimony of all the spiritual seers of the world, submission to an outside authority is a sin against the inward but universal and social authority of conscience. The judging and asserting spirit in every man—the Practical Reason of the race in each of us—is the primal creative energy at the heart of social justice. Hence it is that men, without masters, and without any waxen model set before them to imitate, can soon enough at any time fashion the body of laws and customs they need. It is in recognition of this power in men that all the acknowledged greatest ethical philosophers have taught a doctrine, dangerous to control by an irresponsible few and favourable to power jointly exercised by the many. All the recognised wisest saints have preached



a religion incompatible in spirit with unchallenging subordination to employers and submission to the powers that be. They all hold that good things are not yet good which must be dispensed to the many from the few who are in possession. Good things, to be spiritual blessings, must not only radiate towards all but emanate from all. "For the people" is only one half and that the less intimate side of morality. "By the people" is the thought which added to "for the people" makes men of men. And the seers of deepest insight have never failed to imply this truth even when they have not directly expressed it.

They have recognised the democratic tendency in morality to be as inherent and as prominent a feature of it as whiteness is of snow or blueness of a clear sky. The expression "undemocratic morality" contains as much of a contradiction in the adjective as "black snow" or "red grass." Yet sometimes in some places—as in London streets after the snow has lain a day—it may be right to speak of it as black; and on the prairies, when in seasons of drought vegetation is parched, the grass may turn to a reddish hue; so there is such a thing in hearts, in conduct, in laws, and in institutions, as undemocratic morality; but it is snow besmutted and mixed with soot —it is grass dead and fit to be burned up. For ages morality has been mixed with soot, and the sap of life is well-nigh evaporated from the herb of the field. Indeed, few persons are aware that morality is democratic; scarcely anyone realises that, if once introduced into men's hearts and controlling their will, morality would prove the most levelling force ever brought to bear against government of all by a few.

Almost everyone—certainly every opponent of popular government—concedes that masses not in power are lacking in self-respect and inevitably in civic honour. But they fail to note that the absence of power makes social excellence impossible. The masses unaroused and uninstructed by the process of democratic agitation have scarcely any scope for the exercise of genuine morality. While government by a few may not be the direct cause of the low morality among the unenfranchised masses, there can be no doubt that it prevents the remedy, and that government by the many is



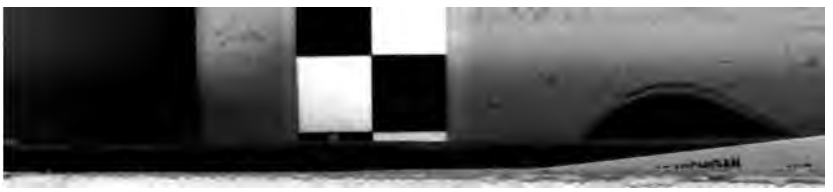
the only cure. Morality implies self-activity and self-direction, and these imply scope and responsibility in society. Real virtue springs from the general will inside each person; and in so far as the masses are dictated to or restrained from the outside, and in so far as they act without foresight, they have no more morals or immorality than dogs who obey or disobey their masters. The masses-out-of-power have dog-morals not man-morals. They fawn, they cringe or bark; they lick the hand of him who has beaten them. Yet these dog-morals have been thrust upon them until the man-possibilities within have been smothered to death. The masses untrained by the franchise have had no chance to act like men, being denied initiative and responsible control. All granting of scope and power helps to redeem; but the conferring of the franchise is the giving of the supreme chance; and the exercise of the franchise is the highest training in civic knowledge and virtue. If a nation be not quickly destroyed by the granting of suffrage to its unenlightened masses, their enlightenment becomes only a question of time.

If now popular government exercises the beneficent influence which Mr. Bagehot attributes to it, we can see the folly and superficiality of such an attempt as Sir Henry Maine's, in his book on "Popular Government," to disparage its importance by reiterating, as he does through one whole chapter, the fact that democracy is only a form of government. He believes that by repeating this truism he can dampen the ardour of democratic advocates. For how, he thinks, can any sane man wax enthusiastic over a mere form of government? He concedes that Mr Edward Carpenter's little volume, entitled "Towards Democracy," does not lack poetic force; "but," he adds, "the smallest conception of what democracy really is, makes his rhapsodies about it astonishing." "If the author," he continues, "had ever heard of the dictum of John Austin or M. Scherer that 'democracy is a form of government,' his poetical vein might have been drowned, but his mind would have been invigorated by the healthful douche of cold water." Now such an effect might have followed, as Sir Henry Maine jocosely fancies, except for the fact that it was this very douche of cold water—the thought of democracy



as a form of government—which had produced Mr Carpenter's ruddy glow of enthusiasm. And, in sober logic, how can it diminish the significance of democracy one whit to say that it is only a form of government, provided its effects are still known to be as stupendous as the poet had declared? If you repeat John Austin's dictum after every democratic verse of Whitman, Lowell, Swinburne, and Carpenter, the meaning and dignity of their poetic chants would only be enhanced by thus sharpening the outline of the essential thought. How sublime that a mere form of government should be fraught with well-nigh infinite weal or woe to mankind! The poets and prose eulogists have never forgotten what they were talking about, when they were praising democracy. Rather did they see in and through their theme, and around it, and before, and after, as is the wont of poets and true statesmen. They perceived that the form of government which admits the many or even all instead of one or a few to the sovereign power introduces the mightiest change conceivable into the character and condition of men.

How is it to the discredit of democracy to be only a form of government, if it be the one form which develops human society into an ethical organism? Sir Henry Maine overlooks the relations of the government's form to those human energies which combine to create it and those other human energies which through it are set free and made effective. He abstracts it from the appetites and passions, habits and fears, ideas and even systems of philosophy, which beget it, and which it in turn begets. He regards it simply from the point of view of social statics, as a mechanical device of politics, without reference to the spiritual ends it serves. One might just as well assert that there is nothing glorious in a glass prism because it is only a shape of glass—notwithstanding the fact that the light from the sun pours into it white, but rushes forth drenched in every hue of nature. It is folly to abstract the shape from the ether waves which it refracts; for it is a prism by virtue of those very energies which it reacts upon. Likewise, a mere statical study of popular government is superficiality itself. The student must move on to consider its dynamics; then he will not only be rewarded with real insight



into causes and effects; if he be capable of awe, admiration, disinterested terror, and sympathy, he will find himself thrilled by the mighty meanings of that which at first was merely a form of government; for at last he will discover it to be a gateway opening towards the City—either of Light or of Dreadful Night. He will discern sufficient reason either for the passionate dread of Edmund Burke or else for the ecstatic hope of Lowell, Whittier, Whitman, Swinburne, and Carpenter, and the host of renowned prose writers who have waxed eloquent in praise of it.

That which stimulates historians and statesmen and philosophers to outbursts of admiration or terror is the unprecedented magnitude of a voting people's evident capacities for good or for evil, as yet unmeasured and too great for imagination to embrace. A Nero were harmlessness itself and innocence compared to what a whole nation of men and women would be, perhaps a hundred million strong, enthroned and made One by a form of government and yet for a day—since the democratic form could not survive the convulsive fury longer than a day—yet for a day mad with vanity and lust, drunk with power and bloodthirsty with revenge. On the other hand, imagine a people a hundred million strong, each conscious of his own responsibility, each contributing his genius, self-control and provident pity to the nation as a whole, through a form of government happily devised for just such contribution. "From each according to his strength, to each according to his need"—a hundred million wills all working together to one goal, a hundred million intellects reflecting upon one problem, a hundred million hearts beating with love for the redemption of each through the integrity of the whole.

When anyone says that democracy is only a form of government he seems to imply that with it no new and different being comes into power or is called into existence. But because Demos is new and different, and infinitely mightier for better or worse, to attempt to make government by the people appear a trifling matter is to indulge in dangerous falsehood. The moment government becomes

democratic, a new spirit mounts the throne untried but terrific in strength, and—in influence upon individual lives—more like a mighty god than like a mortal or like any throng of mortals. It is easy to understand Edmund Burke's violent alarm when he witnessed the birth and the suicide of Democracy in France and the signs of democratic travail in England. But it is hard to believe in the intelligence or honesty of anyone who, in order to cool democratic fervour in others, would belittle its object into being a mere formal device of politics. Because it is a new form, it is a new force in government.

Sir Henry Maine's analysis of democracy is superficial, because he investigated the subject only from the point of view of social statics. Mr Walter Bagehot's is profound and fruitful, because he approached his subject from the dynamical point of view. This latter alone opens up the essential facts to us. It is the only approach that leads us to the inside and secret meaning of institutions. Social dynamics is an investigation of human motives and of outward stimuli to motives. The forces that make and unmake institutions are men's hopes, appetites, fancies, doctrines, and faiths; but these themselves are reacted upon and modified by different institutions; environments, physical, economic, and political, are only so many different irritants to thinking, feeling, and willing; and they must be viewed as psychic factors and not as material and outside facts.

In passing, it is worthy of note that this dynamic point of view—the study of motives as social causes and the study of environments as stimuli to instincts—is the one which each person assumes when observing and estimating himself. He sees himself as a creature never quite created, and yet already a creative agent. Although he may be fully aware of his character as a given balance of impulses in equilibrium at any given moment, he is never interested in himself as an accomplished fact, but only as a potentiality, as capable of response to forces that have not yet had their chance to operate upon him. He includes in his selfhood manifestations which might have been, but which by accident were not. He knows his own secrets; and while others may mistake



his actual record for a revelation, he counts it rather as a concealment of what he knows that other circumstances would have brought to life and light. It is as if gunpowder were conscious beforehand of what the accidental discoverer found out only after the spark had touched it. Now this point of view in investigation and criticism is the only scientific one, whether the object of consideration be one's self, another man, a nation, or any given institution in a nation. It must further be remembered that the dynamic study of social phenomena—nowhere better illustrated than in Mr Bagehot's analysis of government by Cabinet—not only gives the one scientific perspective of facts, but also furnishes the only just standard for judging the moral worth of institutions or of individuals. The exercise of sympathetic imagination which sees every human being as a creative agent, sensitive to stimuli from outside, is the method of ethics as well as sociology. We can no more find out what form of government ought to exist under any circumstances than we can find out what any given form of government really is and means, unless we regard every person who is to be affected by it as an unexhausted centre of spiritual energy, an undeveloped subject of rights and duties, of services from others and to others.

Mr. Bagehot so regards every person who, as a voter, participates vitally in parliamentary government. And he so presents the effects of democracy in England upon each person, that he has tempted us in imagination to picture the ultimate ideal of popular Government, and to note its kinship with the operations which biology discovers as the essential functions of a normal organism. But he also for the same reason makes those of us who know the facts, painfully aware that England, taken as a whole, is neither democratic nor organic, but contains multitudes kept out of power. Its majority consists of a mass of spiritual paupers—persons not ministering, morally or intellectually, but either exploited or ministered unto by a few.

The people admitted to political power in 1832 were only a selected few; even the widening of the Franchise of 1867 did not essentially change this state of affairs. Only in 1885 did England become approximately governed, in the few con-

cerns which politics touches, by a majority of her male citizens. Even within this basis of the Franchise the popular will is thwarted of its sovereign functions in many ways, and in so far is paralysed and deadened. The House of Lords and the non-payment of members of the House of Commons are together almost as powerful a check to the democratic life-current as is the fixity of the term of office in America for the President and the State Governors. The people in a political sense is by no means even yet the whole adult male population, but even the whole adult male population would not constitute the "people." There can be but one people, and that must consist of all the persons in the nation. Democracy, therefore, must be the Government of all persons for all persons, by all persons without exception. We must then admit that even where all male adults are appealed to electorally, and quickened by Cabinet Government, still there exists only a Government by one-half the persons of the nation. There exists only a semi-democracy. All women-persons still suffer spiritual pauperisation, they remain unaffected by the only motive which can arouse and educate full civic virtue.

But even were manhood and womanhood suffrage established, and electoral expenses paid, and members of all legislative bodies salaried by the State; even were Parliamentary terms shortened, and the referendum and minority representation introduced, still the United Kingdom would by no means have become a Government by the people. Ninety per cent. of human life would still remain outside the influence of such Government.

Political action does not at present penetrate into the chief spheres of human interest. Politics in our century leaves scrupulously untouched the largest domains of conduct. Yet these domains are of course governed. They are left to private enterprise, and they are still dominated by anti-democratic machinery in an anti-democratic spirit.

Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century the fundamental principles of all social organisation were either socialistic and aristocratic, or individualistic and democratic. It was not yet recognised that the doctrine of *laissez faire* was just as



opposed to democracy as is the doctrine of Government by a few. Accordingly, all religious and industrial experiments and reforms had been mere private enterprises. It was fancied that groups of individuals, holding aloof from the bad world and from the wicked state, could embody in their own little undertakings the ideal of social humanity. But these attempts have always failed. In severing themselves from the great mental and moral life, however evil, of the whole nation, and from the sovereignty of the State, however oppressive, they cut themselves off from the source of new vitality, sanity, and strength. The real social reforms will come only when the antiquated eighteenth-century individualistic premises, which have been in great part unconscious, are discarded, and a truly synthetic and organic philosophy of society is accepted. Then it will become clear that private enterprises in social and religious liberty, equality and fraternity, cannot be democratic. Then it will also be realised that the State itself and the actual nations of the earth are the only ground on which ideals can be constructed.

The conception of democracy in general has unfortunately not yet outgrown the individualistic psychology and sociology of the eighteenth century. Or, to be more accurate, only that part of the general democratic theory which applies to the government of land and capital has — thanks to socialistic economists—been reconstructed on the idea that the state must make of society an organism. Everybody to-day would define socialism as *state* ownership or the *nationalisation* of land and capital, and would feel instinctively that it is an order of property incapable of realisation by private enterprise or by little groups of selected individuals. But no one apparently has ever yet made it clear that democracy altogether, in every one of its aspects, in its very nature as a social arrangement, can never by any possibility be realised in the private enterprises of isolated groups. The moment you take a unit less than the whole nation, or the moment you take the whole nation otherwise than in its sovereign functions as a state, and attempt to apply democratic principles, you cut the artery that would supply your experiment with life-blood.

It becomes anæmic, idiotic, and impotent — a caricature of democracy, resembling it in all meaningless, accidental, and mechanical details, but totally unlike it in the life, soul, and principle, and therefore different in all its effects—except one.

Only in one result does a democratically-governed private enterprise resemble state-democracy, and only in this one effect does it prepare the ground for real Government by the people. This one effect, however, is so valuable in making the masses fit to control state affairs, that one may well pause with regret before casting a word of discredit upon private-enterprise democracy. The result I allude to is the educational training which accrues to every person who participates in the democratic management of any society, however small and unimportant. Private enterprises so controlled are, if nothing else, preparatory schools in popular Government, and whatever strictures I may bring against them will in no degree cast disparagement upon them as schools of democratic education. But when schools begin to give themselves airs, and to compete with real life, or to pretend to be real life or substitutes for it, the protest must be raised that schools become ridiculous and even dangerous the moment they presume to be claimants to such honours.

No little group of persons, merely by virtue of its form of government, can be democratic. It may adopt universal suffrage within itself and manage its affairs by a committee elected annually and constantly called to account. It may choose and dismiss its leaders and prescribe what these shall say and do; and still it will not be a true democracy. The more it imitates democratic forms and methods, the more grotesque and preposterous it becomes as a counterfeit. For just as "Her Majesty's opposition" must be a component part of the House of Commons, so persons of opposite opinion—persons who could not be tolerated in a private enterprise —must constitute an essential part of any group which can claim to be really democratic. Now it is because a little group created for a particular end, amidst a vast society, must exclude the extreme opposition, that it becomes inevitably a class, a school, a would-be aristocracy. The members as



individuals live mentally upon the outside public; as a clique they may govern themselves like peers. But an aristocratic class, whether religious or of any other kind, practising liberty, equality, and fraternity within itself, but excluding those who do not accept its tenets, cannot be democratic in nature. Democracy is government of all, *within any given geographical radius*, without exception, for all without exception, by all without exception. There can therefore be only one "all," within any district. No machinery for the control of a few in a fixed territory, for that few, by that few, can obliterate the vital fact that the few is not the "all." All of "us," when "us" means a clique or a sect, is not the "all" of democracy, which is the absolute all of a geographical territory, acting together,—opponents grappling in enmity as well as friends co-operating—opponents and friends together making up one organic whole.

Instead of "all," if we may say "the people," my contention that private-enterprise democracy is a self-contradiction becomes manifestly true. It is preposterous that government of the *people*, by the *people*, for the *people*, can be illustrated by an organisation whose very life and being presupposes that a few have drawn themselves off from the people for separate concerted action. It is true that so long as they react upon and influence the nation at large, they are a part of the whole; but they would in this way be just as much a part if they were governed autocratically by one man as if they elected their own leaders.

In short, a private-enterprise democracy cannot be democratic at all, just as private experiments in communism are not *state*-ownership of land and capital, and do not illustrate its effects. So, likewise, little or big societies of persons working for the common good, on definite lines, are not by virtue of their constitution and bye-laws embodiments of democracy. But because they are generally believed to be such, and because they are sure to produce many undesirable effects upon their members, and often upon the community at large, they do untold mischief to the cause of national democratisation. In a nation the few geniuses and the antagonistic forces do not escape; in exclusive enterprises which are proud to

remain isolated, no geniuses after the founders are ever likely to enter, or, if they do, they soon enough lose all traces of originality.

Perhaps the fundamental difference between private enterprise and state democracy is that in the latter the brains are not likely to expatriate themselves. But, besides this, the scope of the areas and the manifoldness and historic continuity of national life, stimulate and encourage genius.

In order that a private organisation may claim in any sense the epithet "democratic," it must advocate National State Democracy in some one of its spheres, whether that of religion, education, art, or industry. It must bring itself perpetually into vivifying contact with the nation's life and must gather up in its own councils, and send forth purified in its own utterances the nation's latent wisdom and the nation's latent character. It must furthermore work for the acceptance of its principles by the state. It must hate and try to end its own isolation and independence; it must find union with all kindred individuals and organisations. If, for the sake of material prosperity, or because of the vanity of local *esprit de corps*, fearing to be merged into a greater movement, it remains isolated, it becomes an anti-democratic force.

This practice of private enterprise has in England for three hundred years claimed as its own rightful province almost the whole of religion, education, art, and industry. It has dominated the whole of religion in England since the Reformation, except that part which is still preserved within the State-Church. English Nonconformity illustrates private-enterprise democracy—a contradiction in terms and a lunacy in real life—in many grotesque and lamentable peculiarities. The sects have each shut themselves off from regenerating contact with the life of the many, outside their own petty organisations. They have therefore become stagnant pools of ancient waters of life. The sects sprang from the democratic spirit generations ago; but while that spirit induced them to cast off



to some degree the aristocratic forms of Church government and the extremist anti-democratic dogmas of the Church of Rome, still the doctrines which they inherited, they counted too sacred to question; thus they have shut their doctrines off from the modifying forces of national thought. They did not in their religion fall back upon the authority of living reason and the social conscience day by day and year by year, but upon the authority of a Book. They did not look for redemption to the historically quickening and illuminating power of the continuous social will, but to an outside and miracle-working Deity. Their religious ideas were an inheritance to them from a pre-democratic age, and only the practice of sectarian exclusiveness has prevented newer ideas from replacing the old. Because of this practice, the sects have never allowed the intellect and the heart of the living congregation to judge of and modify the inherited dogmas and forms of religion. In England there is fruitful discussion of national scope only concerning those matters with which the House of Commons interferes, and only in those matters is there continually growth and deepening insight; but the House of Commons is expected to leave devoutly alone the teachings of the sects as well as those of the Established Church. The result is that religion remains comparatively unvivified. No Church organisation ever receives any new revelation, because the Eternal Revealer—the living conscience and reason of the continuous community—is never appealed to and never allowed to utter its message to our times. If religion is out of touch with modern thought and does not satisfy modern needs, and is antiquated in its forms; if preachers and priests are no longer prophets of the people, it is because government by a few — and that few dead generations ago—has shut religion off from the source of spiritual truth.

The whole of Nonconformity kicks against the principle in religion of government of all, for and by all; yet the application of this principle is the only possible method of arriving at universal and human truth. In direct opposition to this method the sects ask to be let alone, each in its isolation. They resent interference by the House of Commons in spiritual matters as being impious. Nonconformity in its pride

has closed its heart against the redeeming power of democracy. It has failed wholly to see that contact with all the surging and conflicting thoughts and efforts in the whole nation—and, if possible, in the whole world,—is required if men are to keep even half sane and human in religious beliefs. It has failed to realise that every individual must put himself into receptive and sensitive, yet jealous and alert relation with the spirit of the times in order himself to be able by reaction to contribute his own experience to the general fund. And as with an individual, so with every separate society or church. For it to sever itself from intellectual and moral impact with the whole nation and the sovereignty of the State is for it to grow conceited, flighty, and vain; priggish and self-deifying; morbid and dogmatic; rigid, cold, and then dead. Schism—sectarianism—is the great and primal sin against democracy. Witness Wesley's movement. Once it was the most ethical and vital since Protestantism; yet, until recently, it went on splitting up and splitting up again within itself. It has held aloof by pride, and in part it has been kept aloof by compulsion from the best thinking currents of the nation. Now, however, since its preachers are allowed access to the Universities and thus by fresh contact receive new energy from outside, Methodism is beginning once more to wake up and to draw itself nearer in Christian union to all kindred sects. Witness the Quaker movement; not only quickened at first by the Holy Ghost—the spirit of democratic communion—but clearly conscious of democratic communion as the only abode of the Holy Ghost; yet now dying as an organisation; and as a source of quickening to the nation, already dried up. Witness Unitarianism. Until lately—and still—a champion of human reason, yet as an organisation to-day scarcely preserving its earlier dimensions, and admitting to itself that its work is perhaps done. Why has it not absorbed new strength and new light? Because it believed in a non-State religious body,* and that belief allowed it to approve of its own isolation, and because private enterprise in religious organisation, except in unceasing protest, is a sin against the

* Dr Martineau believed in a State-Church; but Dr Martineau was not representative of Unitarian sentiment.



only redeeming power, the deadening effects of which sin rapidly set in. And witness Protestantism itself. As related to the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic Church, it was another private enterprise begun by the democratic spirit on a false premise. Schism has now destroyed it,—itself a schism.

Democracy in religion means the moral idealism of the nation subjected to incessant debate and the corrections arising therefrom and continually reorganised by State government; just as in Industry it means the control of land and capital by the living community. It means the religion of the whole people for the whole, by the whole; but it is necessary to say in this connection that *by the people* does not mean *by the people of a former generation.* It does not mean the people constituting the Church in the time of Henry VIII. or Elizabeth. What forms, what creed, what ceremonies, what holy days, what architecture and music the democratic state will accept at any period in its spiritual evolution we need not now attempt to forecast. Whatever those forms and creeds will be, they at least will be alive. Their absolute contents, their absolute truth and worth are for us, pioneers in democratic revival, matters of secondary importance. The great task set us now is to spread a conviction in regard to religion such as social democrats have made familiar to the world at large in regard to industry and land—viz. that the thoughts and feelings on religious subjects of all individuals in a nation shall, like the thoughts and feelings in one single brain, be allowed unimpeded interaction and shall constitute one unified and common fund to which each person shall have access.

In order to awaken an intelligent demand for this yet to be created religion, of all, for all, by all, the fatal effects of self-satisfied sectarianism must be made known.

Nonconformity, if it be accepted as final by its adherents, becomes as dangerous and perverse an enemy of national democracy in religion as is the pseudo-State-Church. The latter at least implies that the moral revealer is the nation in its sovereign capacity; it identifies Church and State. That identification must lead, as the State advances from oligarchy towards democracy, to the discarding of all doctrines

and all forms of ecclesiastical government which are anti-democratic. But if religion be allowed to become a field for private enterprise only; and if now besides the sects the Endowed Church be permitted to become a private concern superior to spiritual interference by the House of Commons, the State would be nourishing in its bosom a double-headed serpent of spiritual anarchy. The one head would destroy the religious unity of the nation by splitting up the people into innumerable petty and pitiable groups; the other by the moral pauperisation of all lay members. When once democracy again penetrates the realm of religion as it began to do in the times of Charles I. and Cromwell, it will create a reformation of the Reformation itself. The whole nation will, as Milton pictured it, be "rousing herself, like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; . . . as an eagle renewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance."

The Church of England, not having been born of the democratic spirit, is more consistently and completely opposed to democracy, in doctrine, form, tradition, and government than the sects; and it has grown more consciously oligarchic in method, since the High Church doctrine of a sacrificial priesthood has re-connected it with its pre-Reformation days. Taking Nonconformity and the State-Church together, we see that religion in England is at present the mightiest of all the barriers to democratic advance. It clogs the way and cumbers the ground on which the whole of the community might otherwise construct a spiritual temple fitted to the nation's needs. We should never forget that anti-democratic principles are instilled into the nation every Sunday throughout the United Kingdom by 50,000 preachers.

The democratisation of religion will mean, as regards the sects, that they shall be endowed and established by the State, on condition that they drop theological tests both for ministers and members. To drop these tests would mean to discard all outside authority and set up inward and rational conviction, which is the final court of democratic appeal. As regards the Established Church, democratisation



would likewise mean the abolition of theological conformity for clergy and laity alike. But this change would really amount to the Dis-establishment of the present Church, and the fresh establishment of a non-theological, democratic, and ethical communion. In such a communion, instead of the head office being, like that of the present Primate, for life, it would consist simply in membership in the Cabinet Committee of the House of Commons, and the incumbent would, with the rest of the ministry, go out of office. The subordinate officers of the Church, as the teachers and preachers of the nation, would fall into class with other secular civil servants; they would be simply experts, chosen according to their ability and efficiency in their special work. In this way the democratisation of the Church would prove to be its nationalisation. It would create a living and growing religion expressing the soul of the nation and purifying it continually. When we recollect that to-day indifferentism and materialism are rampant in our literature, politics, and industry, and that moral idealism plays almost no part at all in restraining selfish greed and ruthless competition, we must realise the growing need for a revival of religion, for worship of the moral ideal, and for a fellowship in personal dedication to that Ideal. Only a revival of ethical religion will give the energy and impulse, the power and enthusiasm, to inspire an effort equal to the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the introduction of democratic machinery into Church-life and the play of the democratic spirit upon religious convictions will prove the redemption of the world. In the place of apathy and indifference, or of the present-day feverish excitement in the life of the senses and in the mad thirst for gain, democratic religion will awaken the enthusiasm of humanity, the ardour of self-sacrifice, and the joy of social service.

If we turn from the churches and chapels to the educational institutions of England, we see again that democracy, the great vitaliser, has scarcely visited them. The universities, since the fourteenth century, since the days of Wyckliffe, have never been either for or by the people. They are at

present the most active and most powerful centres of anti-democratic influences. So identified are Oxford and Cambridge in the minds of the common people with aristocratic prejudices that scarcely anyone of the middle and working-classes is aware that University education must be opened to the masses if they are to find properly equipped leaders and are to be trained to intelligent co-operation. The people of England look upon higher education—except of a technical and practical-scientific kind—as in itself anti-democratic. The prevalent sentiment is that, if you give a young man of the working-classes a University training, he will lose sympathy with the people and become ashamed of his own father and mother. Here, then, is a mighty domain of human activity, the richest in resource, as yet unworked for the people by the people. "Nationalise the Universities!" will be the stirring and passionate cry of the labour leaders of the next generation. When the highest pursuits of art, science, history, and philosophy are made accessible to at least 50,000 more men and women than are at present allowed such privileges, England will soon climb to the intellectual level which Germany has attained, and will be capable of organising a mighty democratic party like that in Germany, as well as competing with her in manufacture, commerce and scientific discovery.

Secondary schools are likewise, in England, as yet steeped in anti-democratic prejudices, teachings, and methods. The schools for all youths between the age of thirteen and eighteen are hot-beds of aristocratic contempt for labour. When secondary education has been brought to the masses for a whole generation, as now elementary teaching has been, the masses of Great Britain will have received an intellectual equipment equal to the new responsibilities of citizenship. Secondary education of all, for all, *by all*,* will redeem to human use another vital domain of human enterprise.

But the democratisation of secondary education will imply more than the sending of all the young—girls and boys—to

* Secondary education *by all*, and amusement *by all*, of course, can only mean *by the State*; but it must be a State which includes all.



school until their eighteenth year. It will necessitate a complete revolution in the curriculum and in the methods of teaching. Physical culture, scientific and artistic skill in general handicraft, and equipment for the personal and civic responsibilities of after-life will in a democratic state constitute the threefold aim of secondary and primary education.

If we turn from religion and education to the sphere of recreation and the enjoyment of the beautiful, we find as yet no trace of art and amusement of all, for all, *by all.** The whole people has never yet thought, or said, or planned what music, architecture, and drama, what games, holidays, and festivals will satisfy its play impulse.

Exploiters and panderers—a diabolical few—for selfish gain degrade the masses by stimulating a taste in pleasures which is neither innocent nor fine. Private commercial enterprise holds well-nigh absolute sway in the realm of amusement and art.

Although this realm seems small compared with the whole of human life, yet it must be remembered that the playground is, in the economy of social and moral health, as essential as is the School or the Church. When the House of Commons and the Prime Minister, backed by the whole people, claim the play-territory and the province of art as realms for democratic administration, the leisure-times of men will no longer be a menace to sobriety and health.

Politics has as yet in our century scarcely touched this vast side of human interest. When it does, when we have our municipal theatres, concerts, operas, dances, festivals, gymnasia, and games to meet the needs of mind and body, a higher sanity, a sweeter instinct of body and of soul will have banished drunkenness and license.

In the churches, the schools, and the art-playgrounds, neither the machinery nor the spirit of democracy has yet begun to do its work. Measured by the actual hours of waking activity, these institutions are undoubtedly a small part in the life of human beings. The factories, however, the kitchens, the laundries, the shops, the mills, the wharves

* See note, p. 324.



—in short, labour,—these mean nearly the whole waking time of all men and women. But democracy has scarcely touched industry more to-day than it did in the times of ancient Athens. I need not speak at length of the degradation, the neglect, the tyranny and misery arising from private economic government. This is the one department which has been brought before the public conscience as needing revolution. It is, however, desirable to point out two aspects of the problem. Heretofore the movement for industrial revolution has called itself Socialism, and has based itself upon an economic theory. Many have on this account failed to see that the idea of democracy contained the whole solution of the economic problem. All that was needed was that democracy should claim industry as her own. The commerce, the manufacture, the agriculture of all must simply be governed for all by all. Such an idea needs no economic defence. No economic defect which it may contain can impugn its human value and its moral necessity. It is self-justifying. Convert men to democracy and you will have no occasion to convert them to Socialism. The idea of democracy approaches the question of ownership in land and capital, from the dynamic point of view. That is, from the psychological and moral side, from the side of motives and ideals. It solves the problem in great part, simply by pointing to the energies which will grapple with it in detail and in perpetually living contact. Approach the economic problems from the principles of democracy, and all anxieties as to the exact Utopian arrangements and the first steps towards their realisation are removed, by seeing that these matters will be placed in safe hands. They will be in the hands of a living and wakeful nation, a nation of believers in industrial democracy who will be disciplining and educating themselves in economic wisdom.

The second aspect which I would point out is that, while industry, when measured mechanically, is the greatest and largest domain of human life as yet undemocratised, yet when considered in its dynamic value, as providing motive, it is not so important or primarily essential as are religion, education, and æsthetic amusement.



These bring us into touch with man's will; they act on the springs of conduct; they reach the man when he is most himself. In religion, education, and æsthetic recreation he is engaging in the ultimate ends of existence, and is a man, tasting of those goods which are good in themselves, those supreme satisfactions for which a man works all day and earns his wage. These realms are, therefore, as vast in their significance as labour. They are smaller in time-quantity, but higher in emotional value and in dynamic power. If you democratise religion, art, and æsthetic recreation you have set free in men the energy and the desires which are sure to democratise industry. Indeed it is difficult to imagine how any spiritual lever except democratic religion, education, and recreation can raise men to an intelligence and character equal to the task of democratising industry.

Now, if one considers that almost the whole of religion, education, recreation, and industry is undemocratically governed, one is forced to exclaim—Where then does democracy exist at all? Why are France, England, and America called democracies? Whither has De Tocqueville's tidal wave of democratic advance vanished, which was believed sixty years ago to be sweeping all before it? Into what Desert of Sahara have its living waters sunk? We are forced to answer :—there never has been any such tidal wave; France, England, and America are not democracies; no such thing exists as yet, anywhere. Again we are forced to ask:—If government by Cabinet produces such beneficent effects of an educational and moral nature upon all persons who participate in it, how does it happen that democracy has scarcely a great champion left, and that distrust of the people's capacity to govern is more wide-spread to-day than it has been for fifty years?

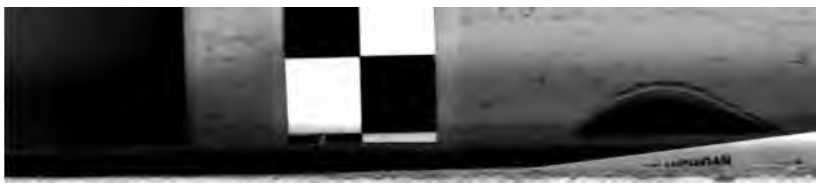
If we look again at the facts, we not only see that there is very little democracy in existence, but we detect that the machinery of popular government has already been set up under circumstances where it could not achieve the results it was meant to produce. In these cases the machinery has produced evil effects, and these have been attributed to democracy

and have undermined faith in it. Democracy is an institution which not only should not but cannot exist except under certain intellectual and moral conditions. Any attempt to introduce it where the requisite circumstances are not at hand would be followed by the very opposite of those beneficent effects which Mr Bagehot saw it exercising upon the public who until 1867 possessed the franchise. The class of persons till then admitted to the franchise had the requisite wealth, leisure, and enlightenment to make the influence of democratic government beneficent.

If men have reached a certain stage of wealth, leisure, and education, democratic machinery can gradually lift them a hundred stages higher; but if they have not yet reached the initial stage they will only play havoc with the machinery and mutilate themselves. The catastrophe will come quickly.

It is evident that men working twelve or even ten hours a day from their twelfth year of age cannot have the leisure nor the brains to be influenced by public discussion, just as it is evident that men who cannot read will be unable to gain access to a knowledge of the facts involved in national questions. It is further evident that men weighed down with the constant fear of being suddenly thrown out of employment cannot have minds free enough from care to grapple with the large issues of national life and to estimate the relative values of alternative policies. Democrats have always seen the necessity of educating the illiterate many before enfranchising them. And after their enfranchisement, even Conservatives have outrun democrats in hot haste to educate the new masters. If there are large classes of persons possessing the right to vote but lacking the education and leisure which would make them amenable to the instructive and stimulating influence of government by discussion, the political result is a state of things which can by no right be called democracy, for it is, as much as ever before, class-rule. An unscrupulous class now gets in power. Masses of overworked men can never by any possibility possess the brain and have the time to call their rulers to account.

But as these statements of mine are just the kind which the enemies of democracy have been continually making these fifty



years, let me, before continuing further in the same thought, meet an objection brought forward alike by opponents and by sentimental friends of popular government. It is maintained that such confessions as mine concerning the narrow limits in which democracy can act well or rather can act at all, are damaging to the cause of democracy, and ought not to be made except by its opponents. My answer is, that such confessions are not in the least damaging. It is nothing against an institution that it pre-supposes the prevalence of rudimentary virtue and intelligence and pre-supposes the existence of the opportunities to exercise these qualities. Furthermore, my confessions are not damaging, unless the conditions I concede to be necessary are in the nature of things impossible. If they can be easily introduced, as I maintain they can, then the true policy of a true democrat is not to set up popular government before conditions are favourable to it; his policy must rather be to change conditions until they are favourable. When the mental and moral circumstances of the masses in a nation render democracy impossible, that is a sign that the circumstances if removable are a disgrace, and that they should be ended. It is the boast, I know, of all believers in oligarchy—calling itself aristocracy—that, unlike government by the people, oligarchy is perfectly compatible with widespread ignorance and sordid morals.

Government-by-a-few fits into such conditions as a death mask conforms to the face of a corpse; whereas government-by-the-many only exists in, nay, is the civic character and intelligence that radiate from the countenances of a multitude. It is the shame of an oligarchy, or of an absolute monarchy, that it might last for a thousand years and that the human beings whom it ruled might be in a lower state at the end than at the beginning. It is the glory of democracy that it either ends quickly or lifts all its citizens to a higher stage of manhood and of citizenship.

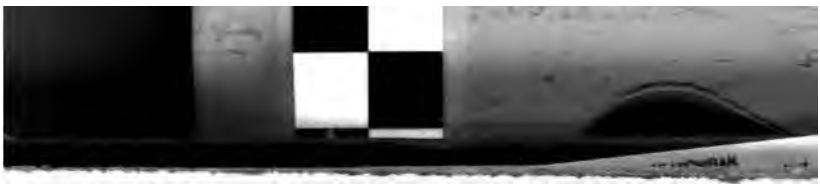
It is, therefore, full time that democracy should cease to be identified in men's minds with mere devices like universal suffrage, short parliaments and rule by cabinet. These are necessary; and they are to be commended when the amount of wealth, leisure, and education is possessed by all, which



would render them responsive to the influences of government by discussion. But until that degree is reached, the watchwords of democratic reformers must not be "one man one vote," or "suffrage for all women," but rather such watchwords as "shorter hours of labour," "higher wages," "better schools," "secondary education for the masses," "free libraries," "municipal workshops," "the land for the people," "universities for the people," "the enfranchisement of all civicly educated women of leisure," and "a Church where democracy shall be preached and practised." Such reforms would not place power in the hands of classes who were unable or uninclined to use it aright. They would, on the contrary, prove the shortest way of making incapable classes competent. They would quickly create the mental and moral conditions under which cabinet government and universal suffrage, including that of women, would work upon the masses most educatively and would continually raise their efficiency. But Liberal and Radical reformers have not yet seen that these reforms are as essential to democracy as any of the ordinary items in the Radical programme. Only some Socialists seem to have recognised that a high degree of wealth, leisure, and education is as essential a pre-requisite of popular government as is universal suffrage itself and that it must immediately follow, if, by some political folly, it has not preceded the franchise.

Let me then return to my contention that the political events in America, England, and France to-day furnish no illustration of government by the people.

The word "Democracy," is often used to mean the actual politics of these countries, but such a use is an outrageous degradation of the literal and the historical meaning of the term. It has done infinite mischief to the cause of popular government. It has made opponents reason thus:—Democracy means what goes on in America in political life; what goes on there is low and corrupt, therefore democracy as an institution is low and corrupt. Legitimately the word stands only for an idea or for some actual embodiment of it or for such tendencies as are favourable to it. The idea is clearly enough outlined by the phrase "Government of, for, and by the people." If actual institutions do not secure government for the people and



by the people, they are not democracy. If actual tendencies do not favour the embodiment of the idea, they are not democratic, no matter what outward guise they may assume. Now, it is perfectly fair to say, and for the sake of truth and popular government it must be said, that politics in France, England, and America to-day is neither for nor by the people of those countries, and that the main actual tendencies in all three are not in the direction of democracy. In them all we have class-rule masquerading as mass-rule, but in none of them does the supreme power reside in the people. Power does not reside with the people in so-called politics any more than in religion, education, æsthetic recreation, and industry. Democracy means a whole people in power as one intelligent will. But the peoples of these nations are not in power. Indeed, not only is there no democracy; there is not as yet any people in any one of them. A people is an organic unit with a self-determined purpose. There are millions of persons in our modern nations who, each in his several capacities, may have ends to pursue; but there is no people. The establishment of a government by all constitutes the birth of a people into moral life.

Such an event has never yet taken place on earth. But many of us have long been tenderly solicitous of England, France, and America; for this very reason—that they have each shown signs of being blessed among the nations of the earth, honoured of the Lord, bearing in their wombs the fruit of the Spirit, a Redeemer of the world—a People.

The opponents of popular government seem really to believe that ignorant and sordid masses, if they have the right to vote, can and will control the state. Such alarmists overlook the fact that under a wide franchise, where the majority are overworked and uneducated, some shrewd enemy of the people is sure to rule. So long as impassioned ignorance prevails, universal suffrage will never prevent a few cool, calculating, energetic brains from dominating. Sordid, illiterate voters come up with open mouth at the call of a trained driver, to allow the bits to be put in; and they swing round into place voluntarily like horses before a chariot. It is the merest blindness not to see that equality of vote is perfectly com-

patible with utter inequality of political power. Under a democratic form of voting, political power stores itself up freely and without hindrance in individuals and in classes, in proportion as these possess greater wealth, stronger brains, and better training. Witness America—the most notorious plutocracy on earth, yet broad-built on a basis of manhood votes. The best brains, best trained, in America are those of the men who make great fortunes, and those same men are her political controllers for their own interests.

When ignorance and poverty prevent the masses from responding to the educative influences of public discussion and of the suffrage, the result is never anything but class-rule. Mass-rule is an impossibility so long as ignorance remains widespread. A blend of riches and education is the only force which can rule; and approximate equality of wealth and education is the only guarantee under universal suffrage of approximate political equality. A Tory democrat is one who has the wit to see in the vote of the poverty-stricken and illiterate millions his own main chance of coming out on top.

I am ready to grant that by means of the suffrage ignorant masses may under most unusual circumstances rule for very brief periods. But the length of those periods is to be measured by days and hours instead of years or even months, and therefore they may be dropped out of our calculation. Illiterate multitudes can never rule for more than three or four days without meeting with some catastrophe, because at the end of that time they are sure to become a house divided against itself. A mob enthroned becomes frenzied and quarrelsome and is soon seized with a suicidal mania. It quickly grows too hysterical to hold out against the personality of some would-be autocrat, like Napoleon, or the shrewd self-interest of a few—like the owners of trusts. It yields itself up in a spasm of frenzy to its own betrayer. Had it gone on frenzied, it would have soon worked corruption and civil war throughout the whole nation; but a mob enthroned taints first and rapidly the central organs of its own government; and on that account it ceases to exist before its havoc becomes wide-reaching. No weakness corresponding to this can be imputed to government by an intelligent class



which possesses a monopoly of political power. Such a class may rapidly enslave the nation, but it would leave no device or energy unused to preserve its own supremacy intact. Let those be happy who can find consolation in the fact that a voting mob can never continue long in rule but submits quickly to be ruled by a few. And yet how can anyone take satisfaction in the sordid incapacity of millions, just because the few intelligences are sure to control them? Democrats have no more tendency than Tories and Whigs, to give ascendency to ignorant and sordid masses, whether the low condition of these be due to neglect or to native incapability of culture. Democrats believe that widespread wealth and leisure, popular secondary education and a democratic religion taught every Sunday from every pulpit in the land would liberate and discipline a great brain force, latent and until now as good as non-existent, among the millions. Democrats believe that the masses may easily be made as intelligent through leisure and wealth, as are now our upper middle classes, and that, then, they would be able to rule as well for their own interests and those of the nation.

There is no occasion whatever for the champion of popular government to deny or refute the statement so often reiterated by Conservatives that political power in the hands of ignorant and sordid masses must work corruption in the nation. We accept the truth of the statement; it is the starting-point of our own protest against the continuance of ignorance and sordidness. We, therefore, do not contradict it. It was the old-fashioned *laissez faire* Liberal who used to deny the truth of this statement, in his exaggerated belief in the educative power of the ballot-box by itself, wherever and whenever introduced. He used to maintain that the suffrage alone was adequate and would educate the most illiterate and overworked. Instead of meeting the Conservative's sober judgment, he used to retort that in any case the illiteracy of the masses was not a greater menace to the State than the prejudices of a privileged class. But this countercharge, although well-founded, was foolish; for it did unconsciously concede the point it denied. Unlike the old *laissez faire* Liberals, the Democrats at the beginning of the twentieth century are



taking the very words out of the mouths of Conservatives and shouting them aloud as their own battle-cries. They recognise the ignorance of the masses as their own grievance against class-rule. They see that degraded voters would degrade whatever institutions they might touch, and not only degrade but rapidly destroy. They resent mass-ignorance as a shameful heritage of class-tyranny. Thus the facts which used to furnish an argument for Conservatism are now used as the chief reason for a thoroughgoing and all-round democracy. Conservatives little dreamed that their insistence upon the political incapacity of illiterate voters would furnish the chief argument for greater wealth, leisure, and education for the masses as a means of ending illiteracy and civic incapacity. On the contrary, they had hoped that what they were saying would produce upon Radicals the same effect it had exercised over themselves. Upon them it had acted as a logical springboard, sending them by some impossible leap to the conclusion that Democracy as a principle of statesmanship is an egregious blunder, and that democracy, as a modern fact, is a colossal evil to be discreetly endured only until it can be radically cured.

Until very recently they have undeniably succeeded in bringing to the same conclusion vast numbers of those who twenty years ago accepted popular government as an ideal and rejoiced in each fresh application of it to social and political life. We have witnessed a stampede from the Democratic ranks into the camp of the Conservatives. Even extreme Radicals, seeing that the widened franchise has failed to create the happy results they had hoped for, have changed faith in the masses into fear of the masses. But Democrats are returning again to their former, or rather to a deeper, faith and to a clearer insight into democracy. They see that their old belief in popular government was not so unfounded in fact and in thought as has been the recent rejection of it. Indeed the soberer advocates of popular rule have always seen that popular ignorance is fatal to it. They have always realised that any other foundation for it than widespread intelligence is mere shifting sand. They have faced undaunted the effects of widespread



illiteracy, upon which Conservatives base their condemnation of government by the many. But they have seen that these effects do not in reality justify the Conservative conclusion. Indeed, the statements of the Conservatives themselves imply that not popular government but the prevalence of ignorance is the cause of democratic failure. Before their condemnation of democracy can be shown to be legitimate they must prove that the prevalence of ignorance is irremediable. But that no man can prove. The very contrary, however, can be demonstrated to the hilt. We know by many an experience and experiment how to lift any class of persons out of degradation and illiteracy. These woeful characteristics are due to purely natural and human causes, which can be, and in thousands of cases have been, removed. If this be so, then not Democracy but the degraded ignorance is the egregious blunder which must be discreetly endured only until it can be radically cured. Not popular government but ignorance under oligarchy is the poison in the body politic which is working havoc with our modern humanity. No Conservative, so far as I am aware, denies that it is the ignorant baseness which makes popular suffrage a menace to the nation. Not one among them would risk his reputation by affirming that power in the hands of a people as intelligent and self-interested as our educated classes now are would involve the nation in disaster. Not even Mr Lecky reasons so. He always traces the degradation of politics in the last thirty years to the greater ignorance of those who since 1867 have been admitted to the franchise. The reason that he is not a democrat is because he does not believe the masses can be adequately educated and leisured, or it is because for some reason he would prefer them not to be leisured and educated. Everybody then seems to consider that in proportion as civic education spreads, a widening of the basis of the franchise can be made with perfect safety; indeed, nearly everyone would go a step farther and say that high intelligence and character must be enfranchised, that, unaccompanied by political power, they would become dangerous to order and prosperity. Almost everyone can see that if intelligence and character do not

find scope in the exercise of responsible functions, they generate justifiable restlessness, and must lead to revolution. Intelligence and civic efficiency must either be stamped out or admitted into power.

Democrats, if their cause is to prosper, must proclaim upon the housetops that the diffusion of social intelligence is the only basis of democracy. This does not, however, mean that *every* individual must be highly capable and highly equipped. A small minority of persons who have not the normal average of brain power or a normal balance of character would cause no difficulty. From a political point of view, they would be a negligible quantity. They could never become an appreciable factor at the ballot. That diffusion of practical reason which prevailed among the American colonists in 1776 was adequate. So was that among the new voters in England in 1832. Popular government does not ask its electors to be geniuses, experts, specialists, scientific discoverers, inventors, philosophers, or creative statesmen. Of these it needs only a number sufficient to design, invent, regulate, and inspire its various institutions. From the vast residue of men it exacts an easier kind and a far lower degree of knowledge and skill. It exacts only the capacity to recognise and appreciate pre-eminent ability and attainment when they appear. Fortunately for democracy, and therefore for humanity, persons who know nothing special of any one art or science and have no originality to create or discover anything new, can, if on the whole well-informed and well-trained to observe and to judge, easily detect the signs of special superiorities in others. For this end only a general education and only the capacity to appreciate the values of things after they are presented are required. Common-sense people, of all-round experience and with a general schooling, can, at least on the whole and in a rough sort of way, select from their own village, when leisure allows, and a motive drives them to consider the facts, the best doctor, the best lawyer, the best preacher, the best teacher, architect, singer, actor, shoemaker—and whom not? For this purpose probably no higher degree of general mental discipline and knowledge in youth is needed for the masses at large than that attained by



the average public school boy of eighteen. After the school days, no further systematic education is needed than leisure hours would afford after a fair day's work. In short, the masses of the people need for the duties of Democracy to be brought to no higher grade of enlightenment—I speak now only of its intellectual side—than that reached in general to-day by members of families belonging to the upper middle class of society. Bring day-labourers to this easily attainable level and the eternal foundation for popular rule will have been laid.

Just here a confusion of thought, widespread and most pernicious to the cause of democracy, must be cleared up.

It is pointed out by Conservatives that government is so delicate and complex a science and art that to expect masses, however well educated and virtuous, to govern a modern State, is downright lunacy. I grant that it would be. But no mortal man among all the advocates of government by the whole people ever expected the actual science and art of government to be pursued and practised by the whole people. Such Conservatives seem never to have heard of representative government, and seem unaware that government through picked representatives is the special and supreme invention of the democratic spirit.

Government is always and everywhere, as Professor Ritchie points out, government by a few. There are not any more Civil servants, legislators, judges, and administrators in a democratic republic or in a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy than in a bureaucratic autocracy. Government is always by a few; therefore government by the many is government by the few. Let anyone to whom this paradox seems flippant and arbitrary learn to pierce with his intellect through words to their meaning. He will discover that this antithesis of words involves no antithesis of thoughts which exclude each other. Government by the people means—if one must unpack the phrase — government by experts and special representatives chosen or appointed by the people; or, one might say, it means government by a few, watched over and approved of by the people. Now, there is no self-contradiction involved in saying that government watched over and approved of by the people is carried on by a few. Democracy is government by a few, who are approved by the many.

Where is the contradiction? And yet, if there is none, what is the sense of arguing, as nearly everyone does, that government is so delicate and complex a science and art that only a few are equal to its responsibilities, and that to propose government by the many is to prove one's self a political madman? It cannot be repeated too often in the ears of Conservatives—yes, and of Liberals—that democracy is government by a few chosen by the many. The only difference between it and oligarchy is that the few in an oligarchy do not rule by intelligent approval of the many.

In this same connection the customary antithesis between "government by the best" and democracy is clearly seen to be due to an unfortunate incapacity to think in language that is inexact. To the ear, "government by the best" seems to be a different thing from "government by the people." But if government by the people means, as it does in every modern republic and every parliamentary monarchy, "government by experts and special representatives approved of by the people," then there is no logical hindrance to its also being "government by the best." There can be only practical difficulties in the way. The great problem becomes simply this: Are the best less likely to govern if the people select them than if the people have no voice in saying who the few shall be that are to govern? In answer, one may fairly say that the few, chosen by a comparatively illiterate and sordid public, are not liable to be worse servants of the people than any self-appointed few would be who were not subject to efficient censure by the people. The haughty prejudice of a highly-educated and gifted, but irresponsible, class is as apt to blind its members as to who would serve the State best as ever the sordid ignorance of the masses themselves could be. But when the people have as much leisure, education, and wealth distributed among them as had the American colonists in 1776, and the new voters of England in 1832, we may safely say that they have reached a point where the "few" whom they will choose will be the best. Even more may be claimed for democracy.

If we compare the hereditary kings of history with the governors elected by the masses, we find that democracies



have somehow proved to be "governments by the best," quite as much as absolute or constitutional monarchies. The American Presidents, from Washington, Adams, and Jefferson, to Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley; the French Presidents, from Thiers to Lourbet; Pretorius, Burgers, Paul Kruger, of the Transvaal; and those of the Orange Free State — Brand, Reitz, and Steyn — compare favourably, measured by the standard of "government by the best," with Roman, German and Russian Emperors, and with the kings of France and Britain. Historically considered, then, democracies are just as much governments by the best as oligarchies or autocracies.

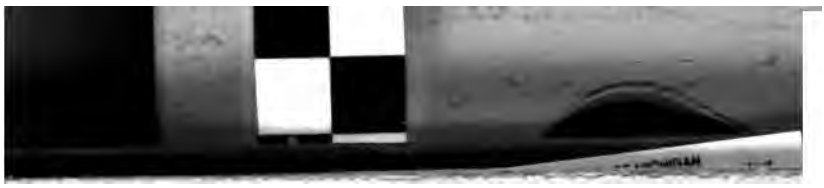
Since the fine word "aristocracy" has never quite lost its etymological significance, that significance should be insisted upon, and this word should be rescued from exclusive association with kings and lords. It deserves the honour of application to the Orange Free State and to America in her lucid moments, when the masses have actually aroused themselves to democratic responsibilities.

It must be remembered besides that, when the best do not rule, it is not the people that is ruling, but a clique, which is exploiting the masses. Furthermore, the idea of democracy presupposes such a mental, moral, and material condition among its voting members as will render political exploitation of the many by the few impossible. Therefore, whenever democracy really exists, it is a government by the best. It should also be remembered that, when the best who govern are backed by intelligent multitudes, such backing means security for the continuance of the best without interruption in office. An intelligent people is sure to replace the best man of to-day when he dies with the best man of to-morrow. In hereditary monarchy no such security, however, is possible. Democracy may accordingly lay a special claim to being pre-eminently aristocracy. If any aristocrat asks, "What do you mean by Democracy?" the answer should be, "Democracy means government by the best." Then, lest the interrogating aristocrat, having ears, should not understand, and not understanding, should be fretted to a fury, let the meaning of the paradox be disclosed.

There is nothing wayward in saying that government by the people is aristocracy. Indeed, the actual problem occupying American statesmen and philosophers of recent years implies that America's ideal is government by the best. Its problem is by what means to bring the best, instead of the worst, to the top. It is the question which special few shall come into office. The only possible solution to the problem is also beginning to be generally recognised. The extreme insistence of democratic reformers to-day upon the necessity of greater wealth, education, and leisure for the masses is due to the awakened sense of democrats that the best will only be brought to the front when the many possess high civic intelligence, and when the sovereign people can easily make its will felt at every crisis. It is seen that universal suffrage alone without a considerable increase of property and education for each family of the working-classes is not enough to secure the attainment of the aristocratic ideal of democracy. It is only when the people are low in intellect and character that they will fail to establish those common interests of the masses as a whole, which involve at the same time the individual self-interest of each working-man. The masses are so low, only when overworked and undereducated. Democracy is government of all, for all, by experts and able representatives approved by all. But government by experts and able representatives is "aristocracy"—if we keep to the literal meaning of the word—government by the best.

The question may fairly be asked: Is it in the nature of things possible to establish the pre-requisites of democratic aristocracy or aristocratic democracy? Many doubt that it is possible.

Let us take first a very long-sighted and comprehensive view of the possibilities. Sceptics point out that the leisure of the 30,000 free citizens of ancient democratic Athens rested upon the toil of 100,000 slaves. Now, it should be remembered that there is a possible although an immoral —but not on that account an improbable—way of securing the adequate leisure for at least all the white races of the



world, after the manner of the Athenian democracy. And the present policy of England looks towards this solution. Many would welcome it. Under conditions of enforced inter-tribal peace, and enforced and systematic labour, in India and Africa, in South and Central America, it would be possible to lift all the white men who are likely to come into existence on earth into such leisure as the 30,000 Athenians secured from the toil of 100,000 slaves. The white races will never breed in warm countries at a tenth the rate of the coloured races. South Africa possesses now 800,000 whites and 8,000,000 blacks. She can conceivably support 800,000,000 blacks, if we presuppose the highest development of all possible resources. The whites, on the other hand, in Africa would probably never reach more than 80,000,000. For all time then every white man there might ride through life on the backs of ten black men—if he wanted to—and he would seem to want to. I need not carry out in thought to its full application this gruesome line of possible evolution, even although it be sanctioned by present-day tendencies and present-day politics. There is another line of evolution within the range of probability which is less hurtful to our sense of justice. Whoever has cared to read the history of the last hundred years knows that to-day any given number of white men can produce more than ten times as many commodities as they could have done a century ago. This is equivalent to every white man's having ten slaves to serve him. But why, then, does not every Anglo-Saxon to-day ride in leisure on the gigantic back of inanimate machinery, just as the Athenian democrats rode on their 100,000 strong slave-power? The answer is:—Although the leisure and the wealth required to make him a capable voter are within the reach of every Anglo-Saxon, although for a whole century the hammer has been at hand with which he might have broken his chains, the survival of slave-intelligence and slave-character still blinds him to his opportunities of leisure, liberty, and power.

But, long before the increased wealth gained by machinery can be democratised—and even if it is never democratised—there is a way of rescuing at least five whole consecutive years for leisure out of the wage-earning period of every working-man's

life and of appropriating these five years to systematic mental training and acquisition. These years, moreover, are of least value to the community, if devoted to manual labour; while they constitute, on the other hand, the period in a man's whole existence, when he is best fitted for general all-round training and equipment of soul and body to make him efficient as a producer and a citizen. It is the period also when the cost of keeping a human being alive and well is still far less than in all the years that follow. One may fairly say that the expense of supporting all the lads and girls of the nation at school during the five years from the age of thirteen to eighteen, could not equal the cost of supporting all the men over that age for three years as in Germany during military service. That the scheme is practicable as regards the financial drain upon the nation is proved by the fact that in Germany, in spite of the three years' military service, the people are better off than ever before. Intellectual and handicraft conscription of all the little citizens between the ages of thirteen and eighteen every day from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. is the kind of conscription to which England is coming.

We may also, without incurring the charge of being visionaries, expect to see, before land and capital are socialised, one or two hours on the average knocked off from every working-man's day of active toil. The physical and mental force thus liberated would be enormous. One might well expect those two hours a day of leisure, if they were utilised by a great democratic party for the purposes of civic education and organisation, to generate in one life-time a democratic force strong enough to accomplish the socialisation of land and machinery.

We cannot wait, however, even until the five years and the two hours a day are rescued from "earning a living" and appropriated to the true ends of life. And there is no need for waiting.

The leisure the people now possess is well-nigh all wasted! The devil of anarchy now sweeps over in absolute sovereignty and claims as wholly his own the mighty kingdom of the people's leisure. If some strong social Educational Party should spring up and organise itself widely throughout the



United Kingdom, it would banish anarchy and establish the spirit of democracy in a decade of years on the throne of leisure. Nationalise leisure and you can then nationalise labour. There are some hours when almost all working people are free and are not too tired to enjoy the stimulating and inspiring fellowship of democratic effort. The Sunday mornings from nine o'clock to one o'clock find all sober workers at their mentally best and clearest and their morally quietest. If ever a democratic movement is formed, it must first seize the Sunday mornings for its greatest educational and moral work. Those four hours are four little windows in the walls of every week which might be opened and would permit even now the light and the air and the blue sky of the social ideal to stream into the cabined souls of the masses. If ever the people are to get more leisure, it will be by utilising for democratic ends the leisure they already possess and waste. When once an ethical or democratic movement is organised, the Sunday will play as great a *rôle* in the redemption of the masses, a *rôle* of the same character, as the Sabbath played in the national development of the ancient Jews. When the labour movement rescues the Sunday morning from the demons of anarchic idleness on the one hand and from the priests of anti-democratic religion on the other, then it will only be a task of ten years to lift the masses out of the ignorance and sordidness which now renders hopeless and friendless the cause of popular government. To democratise Sunday is to democratise at one stroke both leisure and religion. So to do and to do so before any other reform is attempted, is to follow the line of least resistance. Sunday was made for Demos.

It is man's day — labourer's day. That was the end for which the one in seven was set apart. "Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it . . . that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou!" "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt." This rest was to be devoted to the cause of national righteousness, which was the God of Israel. Democratise Sunday and then the week-days! And to democratise religion first, that is, before industry, education, art and "politics," is again to approach the

work of human redemption along the line of least resistance. For man's moral idealism is the great destructive and reconstructive energy in his soul; it is the power in man which every religion, good or bad, human or inhuman, arouses. Once arouse man's capacity of moral idealism in the cause of democracy and its triumph is assured. Democratise religion and you have turned the fountain-head of moral life to the eternal refreshment of man. There is no other line of approach to the spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice in men. Appeals to the stomach even of the hungry, promises to the purse even of beggars, will seldom move them to persistent effort of any kind. But appeals to men as moral idealists, as creative statesmen, as redeemers of their race, will rouse even the hungry and the beggars. The testimony, again, of a man seldom quoted on the side of democracy—Mr Walter Bagehot, a man who, because of their sordid ignorance, did not believe in the masses, and approved of the suffrage only for those who possessed the mental and moral equipment—the testimony of Mr Bagehot on this point is worth considering. The more so, because his is the witness of one who deplores as a folly the impracticable moral idealism of working-men who, he thinks, ought rather to be looking out for their private interests. He says: "It is not true that the lower classes will be wholly absorbed in the useful; on the contrary, they do not like anything so poor. No orator ever made an impression by appealing to men as to their plainest wants, except when he could allege that those wants were caused by someone's tyranny. But thousands have made the greatest impression by appealing to some vague dream of glory, of empire, or nationality. The rude sort of men—that is, men at *one* stage of rudeness—will sacrifice all they hope for, all they have, *themselves*, for what is called an idea, [Democracy is an idea!] for some abstraction which seems to transcend reality, which aspires to elevate man by an interest higher, deeper, wider than that of ordinary life." What Mr Bagehot says is true to the psychology of "rude" men. "The lion roars, who shall not tremble? The Lord God speaketh, who shall not prophesy?" Only they shall not, who worship "the useful" and who have lost the rude capacity to



"sacrifice all they have, *themselves*, for what is called an idea." But rude men being at one stage no better than divine fools, the line along which to get most assistance from rude men is to appeal to them, as moral idealists; happily this is also the line, along which least resistance would be encountered from the vested interests of the upper classes. Now by the strong tradition of the world for ages, appeals to man's higher nature are the special business for Sunday. The whole public is predisposed and at leisure.

While the democratisation of leisure is less remote than some other desirable changes, it nevertheless is not so near as to be within reach to-day. There is still a long stretch of intermediate ground to be traversed. In order that Sunday may be seized again for man and five years added to childhood, an organisation of the already existing but scattered believers in democracy into a compact but vast party for such ends must be effected.

In fact, all democratic ends must wait for a democratic party. But they need not wait long.

Our thought has here gradually returned from a remote and veiled future to the immediate and palpable present. The step in democratic advance which may be taken without delay is the formation of a great national league for popular government. It is the step to which circumstances have been leading and are now forcing us.

The requisites for the making of a great People's Party are at hand; we have, negatively, the break-up of the Liberal Party, and, positively, a great formative idea, an elaborated programme, and a large number of scattered and isolated believers in the idea.

We have the great idea; it is this:—The government of the religious, educational, recreative, and industrial, as well as the "political" life of the living people, by the living people for the people that shall be living to the end of human time on earth. This great idea, which can win the national allegiance of men, is a component element in a comprehensive philosophy of life and duty. Democracy finds its necessary rational setting in the comprehensive thought of biology, sociology, and ethics, that a community, to be moral,

must become a spiritual organism. Democracy claims to be the means toward this ethical end.

We have also the elaborated programme which we need. For a century, thousands of sturdy English men and English women have been working out the various details of reform which the idea of ethical democracy requires when applied to the existing conditions of Great Britain and Ireland.

In order to find a programme it is not necessary to go to Germany and to Karl Marx, as the London Socialists in the Sixties did, nor to France and Auguste Comte, as the English Positivists have done. Nor, on the other hand, is it necessary to invent a programme. There is a pedantic conceit among many would-be democratic reformers, that they and others must sit and think for thirty years more, to discover remedies for the people's woes. They imagine that they must discover fresh solutions, of their own make, for all the time-honoured problems. But the rank and file, the actual leaders of the various efforts at social reform, know already what needs doing. They know, just as the peasant leaders of Germany in Luther's time knew, what changes are required for justice and humanity. The peasants did not make one single blunder as to what their grievances were and what readjustments would remove the grievances. In every demand they were just and right—they were scientifically ethical. No sociologist or moral philosopher could have improved upon their declaration of articles of reform. In this respect of knowing what ought to be done to-day in England, educated would-be helpers in democratic reform stand to the working-class leaders of England exactly as Luther stood to the heads of the peasant movement.

These knew the troubles and declared what would end them. So do the organised and intelligent working people of England know to-day. A new democratic party, to begin with, needs only to take over the expressed grievances of the masses and the various remedies which their own tried leaders from within have demanded, and the party's programme will have gained its body and outline. The thought of inventing a programme arises from the pedantry of outside lookers-on. Former workers and leaders have provided us with enough



details to start upon, and to keep a party busy for a hundred years after it has come into power. Let those points be adopted. The cloistered thinker may furnish ideas and expound a philosophy, to reveal the vital unity inherent in all the details of the programme. But more he cannot do; not even a Luther could have discovered the grievances of the peasants from his monkish cell or devised their articles of redress. Yet any one far less than a Luther, and with no spark of genius, if he could but rid himself of all pedantic conceit, might know enough to accept the programme of the working people, just as Luther should have known enough to side with the peasants instead of with the princes.

If it be not individual conceit which is keeping the natural leaders and organisers of a new democratic party from action, it is perhaps the vicious habit of academic hesitation and of non-committal, which has become prevalent among intellectual men in our time. The natural leaders of a great movement are to-day so sane that they see all the difficulties at once, and, seeing, are paralysed. They are sane enough to know that mere enthusiasm will not remove evils, and that energy, unenlightened, must work more mischief than good. They can see a hundred flaws in all the remedies proposed. So they direct their efforts to holding scrupulously aloof from any popular movements and from all new political organisations for fear these in their programmes may not be spotlessly perfect, all-wise, rigidly scientific, and logically exact. In their aloofness they direct whatever brain-force they have to thinking abstractly and observing, not without pity and terror, like so many spectators at a stage-tragedy, the modern masses struggling towards but unable to reach the light. The would-be organisers of a democratic party see the need of a programme and want to think out one. But even if it be granted that there is none already at hand, their attitude of non-committal is a mistake. They are sane enough to know their own ignorance and incapacity. But, as is often the case, they are too sane to be wise, too collected, too cool, too detached. Truth is an object that cannot be seen at a distance. It must be touched to be known. Human truth comes to the soul by the muscular sense—by motion, by the

heat of the blood, by the quickening of the heart-beats, by running and falling and rising and going farther. It is insanity to expect to receive the data of wisdom by looking on. The doctrine of not committing ourselves until we are experts and authorities, or unless others who are experts and specialists approve, is madness in thinkers; and it is fatal to those causes which need the leadership of the best equipped brains.

But the programme has been elaborated! One needs only to bring its scattered items together. I need not specify them here.

The idea, the programme, and thousands of believers are at hand. Why, then, do we wait? Because we lack the rare and supreme gift of creative statesmanship. We require geniuses equal to the gigantic task of democratic leadership. The masses wait for men. If such waiting were passive and unproductive, the democratic outlook were hopeless. But, happily, out of the bosom of this Messianic waiting, are sure to be born the deliverers we need.



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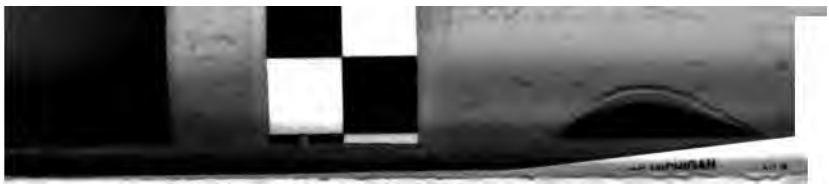
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